

# Exhibit 11-a

**Exhibit 11-a**

MORRISON | FOERSTER

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WASHINGTON, D.C.  
TOKYO, LONDON, BRUSSELS,  
BEIJING, SHANGHAI, HONG KONG

February 7, 2012

Writer's Direct Contact  
415.268.6709  
JMalinsky@mofo.com

### By Overnight Mail

USCIS FOIA/PA Appeals Office  
150 Space Center Loop, Suite 500  
Lee's Summit, MO 64064-2139

Re: Freedom of Information Act Appeal — Request No. **COW2011000600**

Dear Ms. Jill A. Eggleston:

This letter constitutes the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project's ("IRAP") appeal of USCIS's December 12, 2011 decision, attached as **Exhibit A**, to withhold information pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5) ("Exemption 5"), (b)(6) ("Exemption 6"), (b)(7)(C) ("Exemption 7(C)"), (b)(7)(E) ("Exemption 7(E)"), and (b)(7)(F) ("Exemption 7(F)").

The 146 pages redacted in full or in part were produced in response to an August 12, 2011 agreement, attached as **Exhibit B**, between USCIS and IRAP. Under the agreement, USCIS agreed to produce sample documents for IRAP's consideration in determining whether to narrow its July 15, 2011 FOIA request, attached as **Exhibit C**.

IRAP now requests USCIS to reconsider its decision to withhold the following information:

- Names of Government Officials;<sup>1</sup>
- Problems With Caseload or Caseload Issues;<sup>2</sup>
- Trends Observed;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, the names of Circuit Ride Team members, refugee officers, and other government officials involved in refugee adjudications on pages 12, 20, 31, 35, 40, 49, 57 ("Principal Contacts"), 68, 76, 80, 95, 101, 105, 114, 121, 123, 133, 137, 143, and 151 of Exhibit A. IRAP does *not* seek the names of interpreters or security personnel.

In the interest of avoiding further delay, IRAP would accept the partially redacted names of government officials in a manner that would permit IRAP to associate data with individuals, while still sufficiently protecting the individuals' identities. For example, this could be accomplished by redacting all but the initials of the Circuit Ride Team Members such that each individual would remain uniquely identifiable for coding purposes, but remain anonymous to the public at large.

<sup>2</sup> USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, information under the headings of "Problems with Caseload" and "Caseload Issues" on pages 32-33, 44-47, 52-53, 98-99, 108, 119-120, 141, 145, and 154-155 of Exhibit A.  
sf-3104156

FOIA Appeal — Request No. COW2011000600  
Page Two

- Policy Guidance;<sup>4</sup> and
- Primary and Secondary Findings.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to these categories of information, USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, information from Exhibit A, pages 38-39, 49, 77,<sup>6</sup> 79,<sup>7</sup> 89-91,<sup>8</sup> 92-93, 108 (“Summary #3”), 109 (“Other Issue”), 113, and 146-150. IRAP requests USCIS to disclose the improperly withheld information.

In the alternative, IRAP requests USCIS to release all “reasonably segregable” non-exempt portions of the documents at issue. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b). In addition, IRAP requests USCIS to provide an itemized index (“Vaughn Index”) of the withheld records that describes each record or withheld portion, gives a detailed justification of USCIS’s grounds for withholding, and correlates each exemption claimed with the record or portion to which USCIS asserts it applies. *Vaughn v. Rosen*, 484 F.2d 820 (D.C. Cir. 1973).

**(1) USCIS Must Apply Exemptions Consistently and Produce “Reasonably Segregable” Non-Exempt Portions of the Requested Information.**

In several instances, USCIS’s assertion of exemptions is inconsistent and suggests that exemptions were asserted in a haphazard manner without concern for achieving FOIA’s goal of government transparency. For example, on page 15 of Exhibit A, the entirety of the “Trends Observed” are redacted, while the same exact category of information remains unredacted on page 25. In another example, the details of the “Winchester Training Program” are entirely redacted on page 92 of Exhibit A, while the discussion of the “Nairobi Training Program” is fully disclosed. In a third example, the descriptions of cases that were denied are disclosed on pages 155 and 156 of Exhibit A and the names of the applicants and other personal identifying information are properly redacted. In contrast, on pages 146-150, the entire description of cases that were denied is redacted. Such inconsistent withholdings ignore FOIA’s command to disclose all “reasonably segregable” non-exempt portions the information requested. 5 U.S.C. § 552(b); *see* Mem. from U.S. Atty. Gen. Eric Holder to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies (Mar. 19, 2009) (“Agencies should always be mindful that the FOIA requires them to take reasonable steps to segregate and release

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<sup>3</sup> USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, information under the heading of “Trends Observed” on pages 15, 33, 53-54, 108, 124, and 128 of Exhibit A.

<sup>4</sup> USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, Policy Guidance information on pages 16 and 26 of Exhibit A.

<sup>5</sup> USCIS has provided no explanation for withholding, and has improperly withheld, “Primary Findings” and “Secondary Findings” on pages 63-67 of Exhibit A.

<sup>6</sup> IRAP only seeks the information withheld to the extent it is more than just a list of interpreter names.

<sup>7</sup> This page references “Individual Officer Feedback Reports,” but does not include those reports. IRAP maintains that USCIS cannot withhold these reports under FOIA. In addition to the Officer Feedback Reports that should be attached to page 79, on January 12, 2012, IRAP requested all individual officer feedback reports for officers involved with Circuit Rides, but has yet to receive any responsive information or even an acknowledgement from the agency.

<sup>8</sup> IRAP does *not* seek information related to “security concerns” on pages 89-91.

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FOIA Appeal — Request No. COW2011000600  
Page Three

nonexempt information. Even if some parts of a record must be withheld, other parts either may not be covered by a statutory exemption, or may be covered only in a technical sense unrelated to the actual impact of disclosure.”).

**(2) USCIS’s Vague and Conclusory Assertion of Exemptions Without Explanation of What or Why Records are Withheld Runs Contrary to FOIA’s Central Purpose to Promote Government Transparency.**

USCIS has withheld information with no explanation other than stating that one or several privileges under the asserted exemptions “may” apply.<sup>9</sup> It remains unclear which, if any, privilege/s actually do apply. Such vague language cripples IRAP’s ability to know whether USCIS has properly applied the law or even gave adequate consideration to IRAP’s request.

In addition, USCIS often asserts multiple exemptions on each page, but fails to: specify which redaction applies to what withheld information, sufficiently describe the withheld material when it is not obvious from the context, or explain why each exemption is justifiably applied. *See, e.g.* Exhibit A at 2 (repeatedly stating that “[t]he types of documents and/or information that we have withheld *could* consist of . . .” without ever specifying what they *do* consist of); *see id.* at 32 (asserting three exemptions without specifying the redactions they apply to or why exemptions are being asserted); *id.* at 49 (withholding “notes” but not specifying the subject of the “note”). Without such specific information, IRAP cannot know whether exemptions were properly asserted or even what exemption to challenge.

USCIS’s vague and conclusory bases for withholding information are contrary to FOIA’s purpose to promote open government and conflict with the Court’s narrow construction of FOIA’s exemptions in support of this policy. *U.S. Dep’t of Justice v. Julian*, 486 U.S. 1, 8 (1988) (FOIA’s mandate calls for broad disclosure of government records and thus its exemptions “are to be narrowly interpreted.”); *see Assembly of State of Cal. v. U.S. Dept. of Commerce*, 968 F.2d 916, 920 (9th Cir. 1992); *see also* Memorandum for United States Attorney General Eric Holder to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies (March 19, 2009) (“Holder Memo”) (“An agency should not withhold records merely because it can demonstrate, as a technical matter, that the records fall within the scope of a FOIA exemption.”).

Accordingly, IRAP requests that USCIS disclose the above-described information in full.

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<sup>9</sup> For example, USCIS states that “[t]he types of documents and/or information that we have withheld under this exemption *may* consist of documents containing predecisional information, documents or other memoranda prepared in contemplation of litigation, or confidential communications between attorney and client.” (Emphasis added); *see generally* Exhibit A at 2.  
sf-3104156

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FOIA Appeal — Request No. COW2011000600  
Page Four

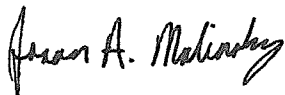
**(3) USCIS's Broad Withholding of Information Conflicts with the Agency's Agreement to Produce Sample Documents.**

At USCIS's behest, IRAP agreed to review sample documents and consider narrowing its request. (*See* Exhibit B.) IRAP cannot reasonably be expected to make any decisions on the scope of its request based on incomplete information.

Thus, consistent with FOIA's command and its intent, the Obama Administration's FOIA Guidelines, and the agreement reflected in Exhibit B, USCIS should now disclose the withheld information described above. In the alternative, USCIS should disclose all reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of the requested information and produce a Vaughn Index.

We look forward to your decision on our appeal within twenty (20) business days, as the statute requires. 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(A)(ii).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason A. Malinsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jason" and last name "Malinsky" clearly legible.

Jason A. Malinsky  
Attorney for the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project

# Exhibit A

**Exhibit A**

**RECEIVED**

DEC 15 2011

MORRISON &amp; FOERSTER

**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

December 12, 2011

COW2011000600

Jason A. Malinsky  
Morrison and Foerster, LLP  
425 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2482

Dear Jason A. Malinsky:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act (FOIA/PA) request received in this office July 22, 2011 regarding the following.

All statistics on overseas adjudications, including requests for review/reconsideration, from the Overseas Tracking System from 2003 to present day, including but not limited to: Data on decisions (e.g. grant v. denial rates) broken down by circuit ride leader, circuit ride, office district, and individual officer; each applicant's country of origin; the ultimate determination (e.g. re-interview v. reversal; grant v. deny); and

All records discussing or analyzing the above-mentioned statistics, including, but not limited to internal memoranda, reports, and emails; The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") quality assurance program review "of a statistically valid sample of refugee cases" conducted in Fiscal Year 2009 as described in Alejandro N. Mayorkas's July 31, 2010 memorandum to January Contreras, a copy of which is attached;

All post-2001 USCIS data on overseas adjudications, including all available data prior to the introduction of the case management system.

Per our conference call on August 12, 2011 USCIS has agreed to a rolling release of records. We are providing the following records at this time – sample USCIS Trip Reports from various locations.

We have completed the review of all documents and have identified 157 pages that are responsive to your request. Enclosed are 11 pages released in their entirety, and 137 pages released in part. We are withholding 9 pages in full. In our review of these pages, we have determined that they contain no reasonably segregable portion(s) of non-exempt information. We have reviewed and have determined to release all information except those portions that are exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), (b)(7)(E), and (b)(7)(F) of the FOIA.

The following exemptions are applicable:



Freedom of Information Act U.S.C. § 552 (b)(5)

Exemption (b)(5) provides protection for inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters, which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld under this exemption may consist of documents containing predecisional information, documents or other memoranda prepared in contemplation of litigation, or confidential communications between attorney and client.

Freedom of Information Act U.S.C. § 552 (b)(6)

Exemption (b)(6) permits the government to withhold all information about individuals in personnel, medical and similar files where the disclosure of such information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld may consist of birth certificates, naturalization certificates, driver's license, social security numbers, home addresses, dates of birth, or various other documents and/or information belonging to a third party that are considered personal.

Freedom of Information Act U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(C)

Exemption (b)(7)(C) provides protection for personal information in law enforcement records, which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. We have withheld information relating to third-party individuals. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld could consist of names, addresses, identification numbers, telephone numbers, fax numbers, or various other documents that are considered personal.

Freedom of Information Act U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(E)

Exemption (b)(7)(E) provides protection for records or information for law enforcement purposes which would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld could consist of law enforcement systems checks, manuals, checkpoint locations, surveillance techniques, and various other documents.

Freedom of Information Act U.S.C. § 552(b)(7)(F)

Exemption (b)(7)(F) permits the government to withhold all information about any individual when disclosure of information about him could reasonably be expected to endanger his life or physical safety. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld could consist of names, addresses, telephone numbers, source provided information, such as testimony, statements, reports, investigations, audio/video tapes, or various other documents or information withheld as to not endanger the life or physical safety of an individual.

The enclosed record consists of the best reproducible copies available. Certain pages contain marks that appear to be blacked-out information. The black marks were made prior to our receipt of the file and are not information we have withheld under the provisions of the FOIA or PA.

If you wish to appeal this determination, you may write to the USCIS FOIA/PA Appeals Office, 150 Space Center Loop, Suite 500, Lee's Summit, MO 64064-2139, within 60 days of the date of this letter. Both the letter and the envelope should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

The National Records Center does not process petitions, applications or any other type of benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act. If you have questions or wish to submit documentation relating to a matter pending with the bureau, you must address these issues with your nearest District Office.



All FOIA/PA related requests, including address changes, must be submitted in writing and be signed by the requester. Please include the control number listed above on all correspondence with this office. Requests may be mailed to the FOIA/PA Officer at the PO Box listed at the top of the letterhead, or sent by fax to (816) 350-5785. You may also submit FOIA/PA related requests to our e-mail address at [uscis.foia@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:uscis.foia@uscis.dhs.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill A. Eggleston", written over a horizontal line.

Jill A. Eggleston  
Director, FOIA Operations

**Strong, Stacy K**

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**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 31, 2011 3:02 PM  
**To:** Strong, Stacy K  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases  
**Attachments:** Re: RFR/Denial Letter Tracking

Sorry, Stacy - I should have included the attached email. It explains why we analyzed the RFR Pilot cases in the manner that we did.

Also, please note that the Pilot cases only included those that utilized the old denial letter, and not the one currently in use; that is what the current RFR review is supposed to address.

Hope this helps,  
Anthony

---

**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Friday, July 29, 2011 4:47 PM  
**To:** Strong, Stacy K  
**Subject:** FW: RFR Pilot Cases

Stacy,

Here is the analysis that Kelly provided concerning the RFR Pilot and whether the reason(s) for the RFR matched with the denial reason(s). She pulled the statistical information from the RFR Database, which is located at: L:\RFR\Pilot - Amman, Jordan\Database. Please note that the Pilot consisted of 467 cases that were adjudicated within the Amman - RSC's jurisdiction (Amman, Egypt, Iraq, Syria). The nationalities were primarily Iraqi; there also were the following nationalities:

- 1 Burundian
- 2 Sudanese
- 7 Somalis
- 1 Syrian

There are Burmese cases contained in the Database, but they were not part of the Pilot.

We may need to update the RFR Pilot PowerPoint with the information contained in Kelly's analysis. The PowerPoint was a preliminary analysis concerning statistical information. The PowerPoint is located at: L:\RFR\Pilot - Amman, Jordan.

Also, hard copies of the actual RFRs are kept in cabinets across from Manpreet and Marcelas' cubicles. They are labeled, "RFR Pilot - Amman".

Please let me know if we need to discuss Kelly's analysis. She had to explain to me a couple of times how the numbers were captured and presented.

Hope this helps,  
Anthony

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Anthony S. Moscato, Jr.  
Domestic Desk Officer, Refugee Affairs Division

8/19/2011

(b)(5)

Refugee, Asylum, & International Operations Directorate  
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services

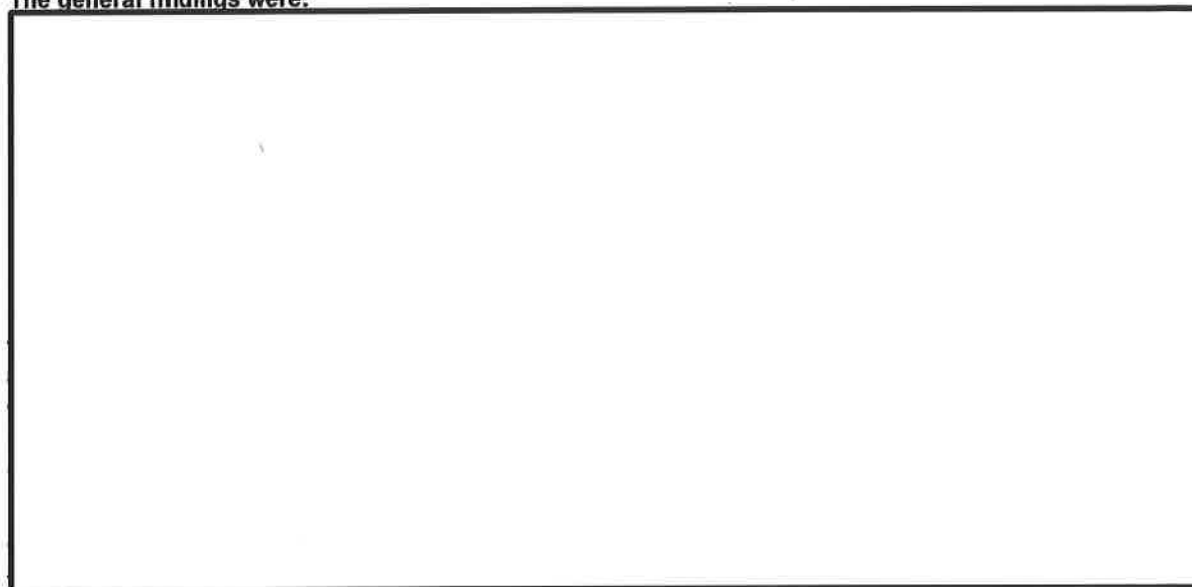
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**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Monday, May 16, 2011 9:07 AM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Anthony,

I've attached the spreadsheet with the data I entered indicating the number of times an RFR alleges the correct reasons for case denial.

**The general findings were:**



Let me know if there is anything you'd like me to update/change!

Thanks,  
Kelly

---

**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2011 7:32 AM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Subject:** Re: RFR Pilot Cases

I should be in by 8. I will stop by.

---

**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2011 07:32 AM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

8/19/2011

I'm in today- let me know when I should come by or drop by my cube whenever you're free.

---

**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 12, 2011 7:55 PM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Subject:** Re: RFR Pilot Cases

Great - thanks, Kelly. Let's catch-up tomorrow morning if you are in.

---

**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 12, 2011 05:52 PM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Anthony,

RFR pilot case review update:

Today I mainly just reviewed case data and entered it into the spreadsheet—I'm a little over halfway done with the 468 cases.

Thanks,  
Kelly

---

**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 5:26 PM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Thanks for the update, Kelly. Have a great night!

---

**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 5:23 PM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Hi Anthony,

Here's my update for my work on the RFR pilot case review today:

- Created excel spreadsheet to enter data in (took a fair amount of time because it was difficult to figure out how to organize/create formulas for it)
- Reviewed cases highlighted by IOM to determine their statuses
- Began reviewing case data and entering it in the spreadsheet (there are 468 cases to review)

Thanks,  
Kelly

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**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 4:01 PM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly

**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases.

Thanks, Kelly. This is extremely helpful.

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**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 3:35 PM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Hi Anthony,

Here is an update on the 6 cases that IOM highlighted (notes in italics are taken from the RFR tracker HQ section):

[REDACTED] Applicant claimed in RFR that he had new documents that would address his denial based on military history- however when asked to provide documents, he said he was unable to provide them. RFR has not been adjudicated past this point.

**NOTE TO FILE FOR** [REDACTED]  
*In his RFR, PA indicated that he "... discovered incidentally some copies of my papers in my father's old things box [sic] so I asked him to send it to me as fast as he can ..." to address the credibility denial concerning his military history and involvement in acts that raise the possibility of the persecutor bar.*

*On or about 19 November 2010, USCIS issued a Request for Additional Information, indicating that the PA had ninety (90) days to submit copies of his military and/or school records to support his testimony concerning his military history. On or about 13 December 2010, USCIS received information that the PA was unable to provide any additional documents in support of his refugee claim.*

[REDACTED]  
Case identified as discretionary denial and forwarded to [REDACTED] - on 26 Jan 2010, [REDACTED] indicated he would adjudicate the case.

[REDACTED] Under "SRO" tab it indicates that the case was approved for resettlement, but then under the "HQ" tab it indicates the PA had already been resettled.

WRAPS indicates that [REDACTED] on or about 19 November 2009.

[REDACTED]  
Case identified as discretionary denial and forwarded to [REDACTED] indicated he would adjudicate the case.

[REDACTED] RFR reviewed on January 26, 2010 and **denied**- RFR had "no allegations".

[REDACTED] RFR reviewed on January 19, 2010 and **denied**- RFR had "no allegations".

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**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 11:25 AM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Give me a few minutes, and I will be by

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**From:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 10:36 AM

8/19/2011

(b)(6)

**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Thanks! Can you stop by my cube when you have a chance...I've tried a couple different variations, but am having trouble figuring out how to get all this information into a spreadsheet without having it be too confusing and want your advice!

Kelly

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**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 11, 2011 9:27 AM  
**To:** Hradsky, Kelly  
**Subject:** FW: RFR Pilot Cases

Here is the list ...

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**From:** STOYANOVA Slaviya [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 13, 2010 4:29 AM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony  
**Cc:** BROWN Mark; Sinclair-Smith, Suzanne  
**Subject:** RE: RFR Pilot Cases

Dear Antony,

Please find attached list of cases from your last master list showing the most recent USCIS event for each case. There are 6 cases highlighted in yellow and they are still pending adjudication. Those cases are:

- [REDACTED] - Per your last e-mail, HQ has requested additional information but applicant claims he cannot provide IOM with requested documents.
- [REDACTED] - Discretionary Denial, case is still pending RFR adjudication, to be reviewed at your end
- [REDACTED] - Pending I-602 Waiver and RFR adjudication, will be sent to FOD's attention
- [REDACTED] - Pending adjudication at your end
- [REDACTED] - Pending adjudication at your end
- [REDACTED] - Pending adjudication at your end

Except these cases everything was adjudicated.

Please let us know if you have any concerns.

Kind regards,  
Slaviya

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**From:** Moscato, Anthony [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 08, 2010 10:12 PM  
**To:** STOYANOVA Slaviya  
**Cc:** BROWN Mark; Sinclair-Smith, Suzanne  
**Subject:** RFR Pilot Cases

Hi, Slaviya

Attached, please find the current list of RFR Pilot cases (encrypted). Password will follow.

During the PRM Workshop last week, Mark requested that we forward to you the recent list given that you have not received an updated list from us since in or around September/October 2010. Sorry for any confusion, but please note that the RFR Pilot cases were a defined, finite group of cases. We have not identified any additional

cases beyond the sample pool initially provided to us about one year ago (in or around October 2009). The updated Master List that we have forwarded to you throughout the last year has been to provide updates for cases that should be attributed to RAD as an RFR Pilot case. As you may noted, we were removing cases from the list because we were unable to complete the review from RAD due to missing documents, illegible copies, IO already adjudicated, etc.

To ensure that our records are in sync with one another, would you kindly compare your records to those on the attached list and let us know what cases may still be pending with us as part of the RFR Pilot for final results? Also, would you please indicate what your records show concerning the RFR decision for each case?

Thanks for your help; we truly appreciate it. Please let us know if there are any questions or concerns.

Anthony

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Anthony S. Moscato, Jr.  
Domestic Desk Officer, Refugee Affairs Division  
Refugee, Asylum, & International Operations Directorate  
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services

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(b)(5)

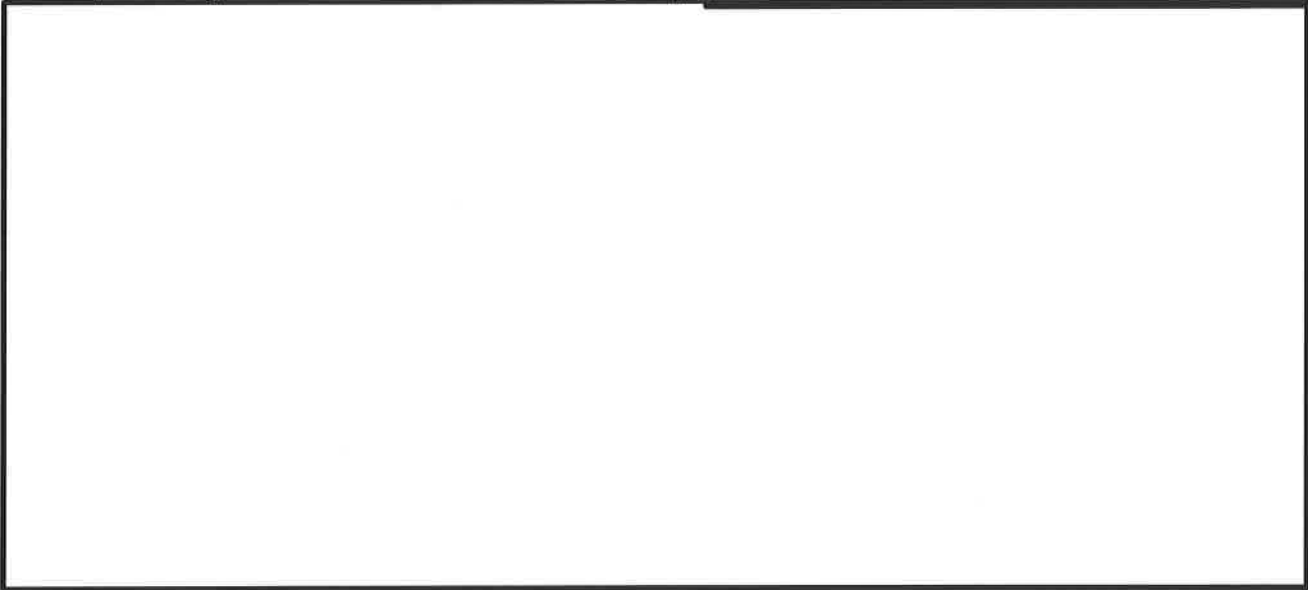
**Strong, Stacy K**

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**From:** Higgins, Jennifer B  
**Sent:** Monday, April 18, 2011 8:34 AM  
**To:** Moscato, Anthony; Chiorazzi, Anne; Strong, Stacy K  
**Subject:** Re: RFR/Denial Letter Tracking

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Thanks, Anthony. As we discussed the other day, 

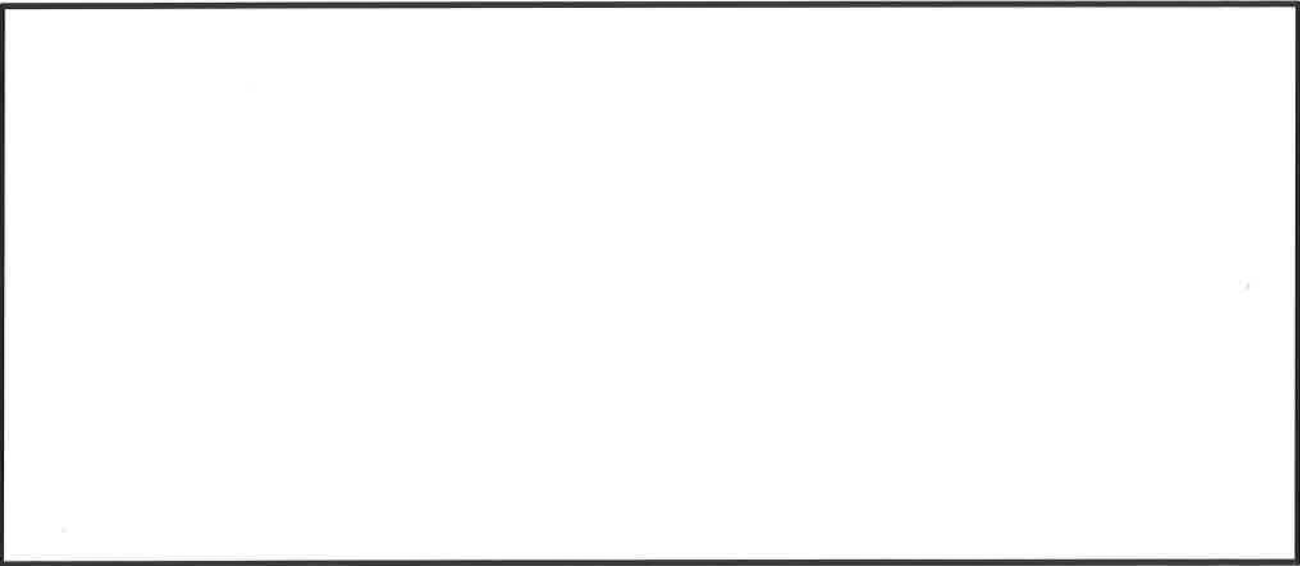


Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Moscato, Anthony  
**To:** Higgins, Jennifer B; Chiorazzi, Anne  
**Sent:** Fri Apr 08 10:42:18 2011  
**Subject:** RE: RFR/Denial Letter Tracking

Jennifer,



Anne - please feel free to chime-in as necessary.

Hope this helps,  
Anthony

----- Original Message -----

From: Higgins, Jennifer B  
To: Moscato, Anthony  
Sent: Thu Apr 07 18:38:47 2011  
Subject: RFR/Denial Letter Tracking

Did you get a sample pulled for this project, yet? Also, please send me the guidance we gave to officers on how to assess whether an RFR "matched" the reasons for the denial and language used in the database to track the finding.

Thanks!

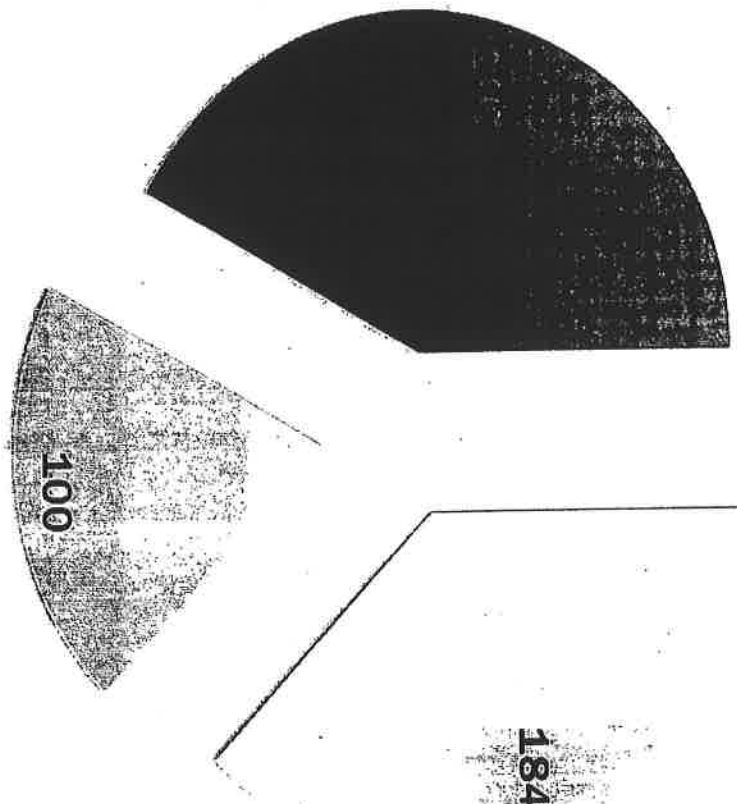
## **Participants - Adjudicators**

- **Original 50**
  - **ROs - GS 11, 12**
  - **Iraq Training**
  - **Interviewed Iraqi Cases**
- **Post Original 50**
  - **ROs - GS 9, 11, 12**
  - **Iraq Training**
  - **Attended RFR Training**
  - **Non – Iraq Training (Shadow Cases); RFR Database entry**

## **General Plea/Criticism - Outcomes**

- 1. Denial Upheld – no significant errors**
- 2. Re-interview Requested – significant error in a material element found, but insufficient information to determine eligibility for resettlement**
- 3. Denial Overturned – significant error found, and in absence of error, eligible for resettlement**

## REASON(S) RFR FILED



■ NO ALLEGATION

■ NEW EVIDENCE

■ CORRESPONDING  
ALLEGATION

(b)(6)

(b)(7)(f)

**Refugee Processing Trip Report**  
*Tham Hin, Mae La, Mae Sot, Thailand*  
 January 14<sup>th</sup> – March 4, 2011

**Circuit Ride Basics:**

**Processing Site:** *Bangkok District Office*  
*Tham Hin, Thailand*  
*Mae La Camp, Thailand*  
*Mae Sot, Thailand*

**Team Composition:**

Team Leader, RAD  
 ENRO, RAD  
 AD  
 O, RAD  
 , RAD  
 , RAD  
 , ZHN  
 Fingerprinter, ZLA

**Dates of Processing:**

Tham Hin: 01/19/2011 – 01/21/2011  
 Mae La: 01/25/2011 – 02/03/2011  
 Mae Sot: 02/04/2011 – 03/01/2011  
 Bangkok: 03/03/2011 – 03/03/2011

**Travel Days:** To Bangkok: 01/14/2011 – 01/16/2011  
 To Tham Hin: 01/19/2011  
 To Bangkok: 01/21/2011  
 To Mae Sot: 01/24/2011  
 To Bangkok: 03/02/2011  
 To U.S. 03/04/2011

**Holidays:** 01/17/2011: Martin Luther King Day  
 02/21/2011: Presidents' Day

**Processing Venue:**

(b)(6).

Case Information:

## Overall Statistics:

Scheduled		Approved		Denied		Hold		No Show		Closed	
Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People
973	2743	673	1732	2	2	173	684	125	325	0	0
100.00%		63.14%		0.07%		24.94%		11.85%		0.00%	

## Cases Placed on Hold:

	On Hold		TRIG (Waiver)		TRIG (No Waiver)		HQ Hold		Other		Other	
	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People
Total #	173	684	14	40	0	0	9	42	150	602		
Percentage	100.00%		5.85%		0.00%		6.14%		88.01%		0.00%	

Cases of interest representing the norm or the unusual in each hold category:

There were three Negusie holds:



There were three CLASS hits and three SAO hits (SCH/ENV) that require HQ resolutions. The majority of the holds were for CLASS name checks.

Processing Partners:

A. OPE: *International Rescue Committee*: The Field Team Leaders in Tham Hin, Mae La and Mae Sot were, respectively, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Two representatives from IRC attended a Bangkok District Office briefing (see below).

B. UNHCR: On January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Bangkok District Office, UN representative [REDACTED] provided a briefing on general background information of Burmese refugees residing in the nine camps in Thailand.

C. DOS: [REDACTED] from PRM attended the 1/18 briefing in the BKK District office.

D. Other (e.g., USCIS-IO, ICE Embassy Attaché): Bangkok District Office provided both the facility to host the aforementioned briefing and well as other logistical support such as transportation to for the DHS team circuit riders to Tham Hin and Mae Sot. RSO briefing was provided for the team on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at the U.S. embassy in Bangkok.



**Interpreters:** There were a total of 10 interpreters provided by the IRC during the course of this circuit ride, although not all ten were available at all processing locations. The interpreters spoke Karen S'gaw, Karen P'wo and Burmese. The standard of the interpretation was high and no egregious mistakes in translation were noted by the officers.

**One sad note:** one of the interpreters who worked with the team in Tham [redacted] [redacted] suffered significant injuries in a car accident on her way to Ban Don Yan camp near Sangklaburi, Thailand, after the team completed the Tham Hin portion of the circuit ride and went back to Bangkok. The injuries she suffered required several operations at a hospital near Bangkok. In the end, the team was relieved to learn from IRC that she was expected to make a full recovery, even though that would require lengthy rehabilitation.

**Close-Out Partners Meeting:** None

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### ***RAD Internal Report***

#### **Overseas Communication Folder:**

NA

#### **Caseload Issues:**

##### **Description of caseload:**

The caseload was predominantly Karen. Unlike previous circuit rides there were few no shows in Tham Hin and all no shows in Mae La and Mae Sot were replaced by other applicants on the same day.

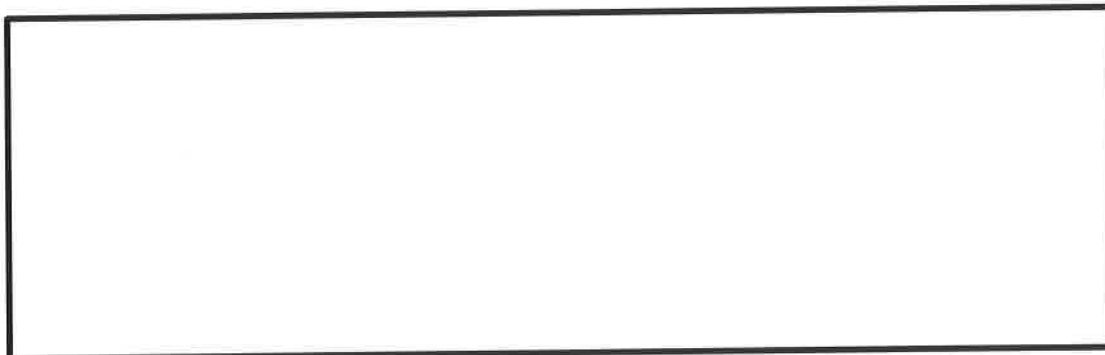
P2 There were 949 P-2 cases interviewed during this circuit ride.

P1 There were 17 P-1 cases interviewed during this circuit ride, mostly involving cases of humanitarian concerns – women at risks and protection issues.

There were 7 V-93 cases during this circuit ride.

Ethnic Populations: ethnic Karens and Burmese residing the following refugee camps in Thailand: Tham Hin, Mae La, Ma Ra Ma Luang, Mae La Oon, Umpium, and Nupo.

##### **Trends Observed:**



##### **Suspected Fraud Trends:**

The team did not observe any significant fraud trends.

##### **Other trends and issues observed during the Circuit Ride:**

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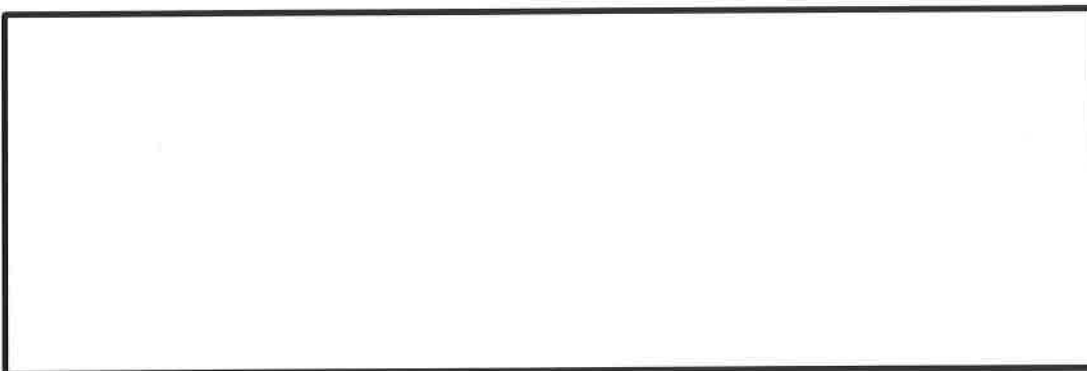
As were the practices of prior teams to this location, this team continued the use of an addendum sheet of questions that covered important aspects of this population, especially TRIG issues for greater uniformity of interviews.

**Follow-Up Training, Policy, and Research Needs:**

**Training:**

Some of the RO's who were having their first experience with the Burmese population showed some confusion in interpreting how the CAA impacts on applicants' eligibilities. In particular, they were unsure as to under what circumstances TRIG worksheets were needed. This occurrence was not unique to this circuit ride in this team leader's experience as CAA and other group exemptions can be difficult to unravel. It is suggested that for future Pre-Departure, more time is devoted to this subject to mitigate uncertainty on the ground.

**Policy Guidance:**

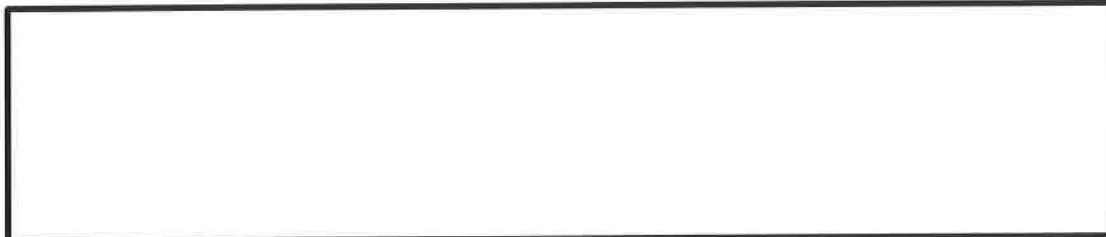


**Research (Country Conditions, etc.):**

NA

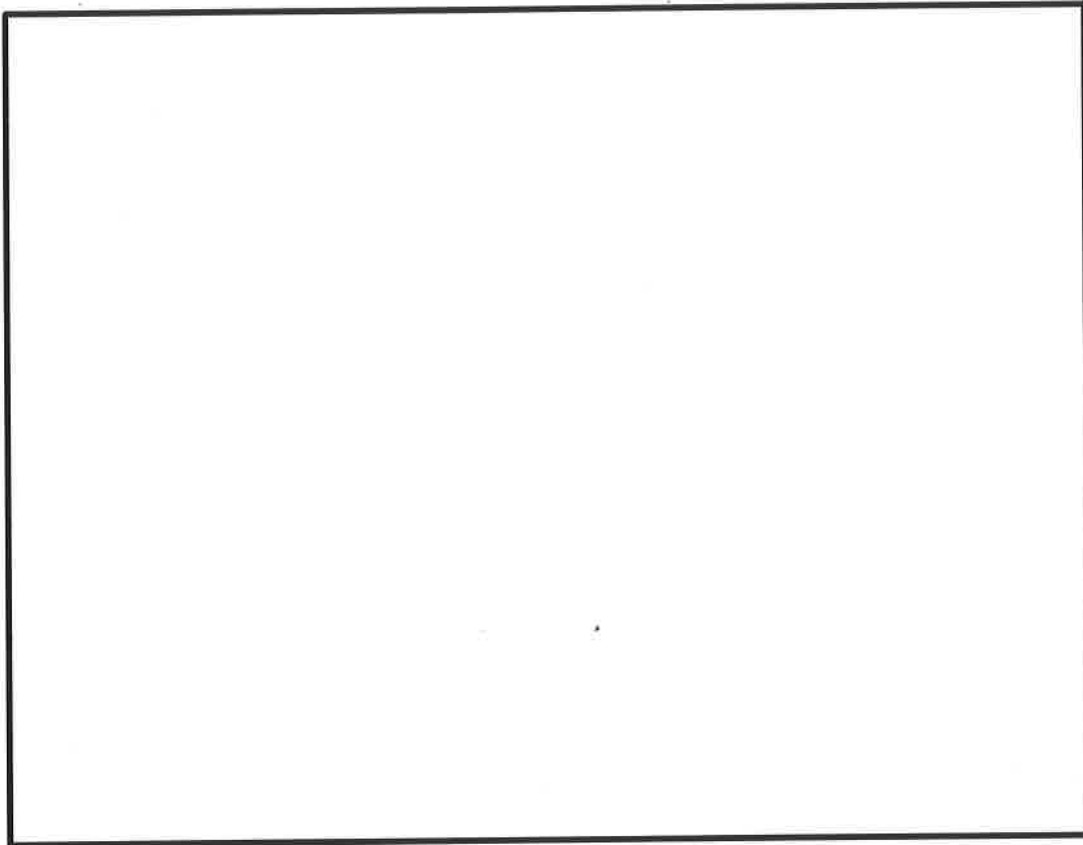
**Logistics:**

**Travel:**

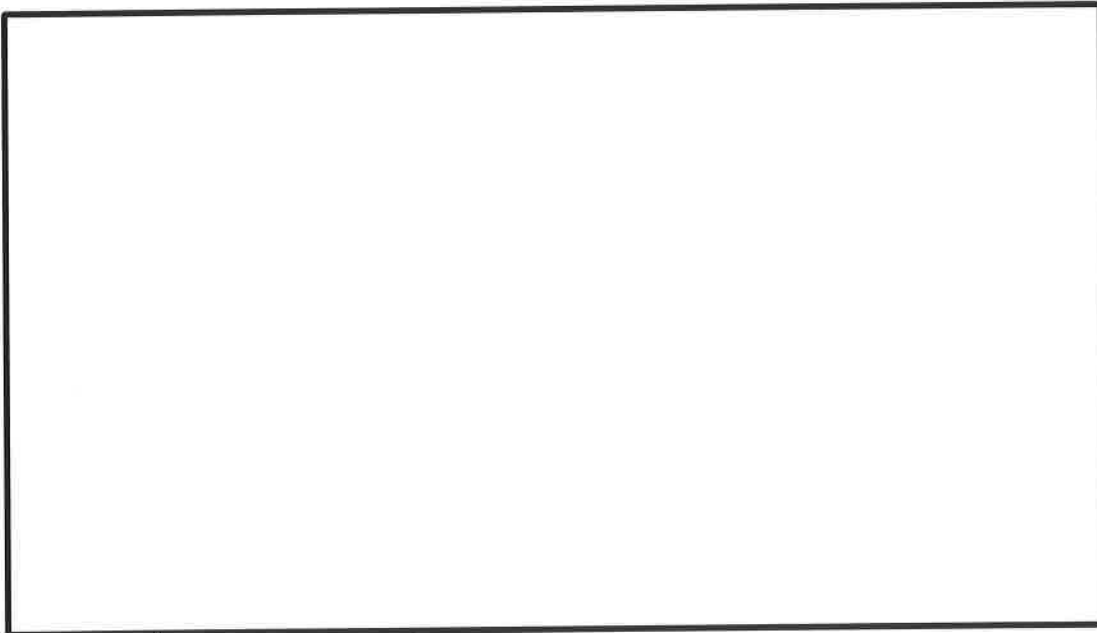


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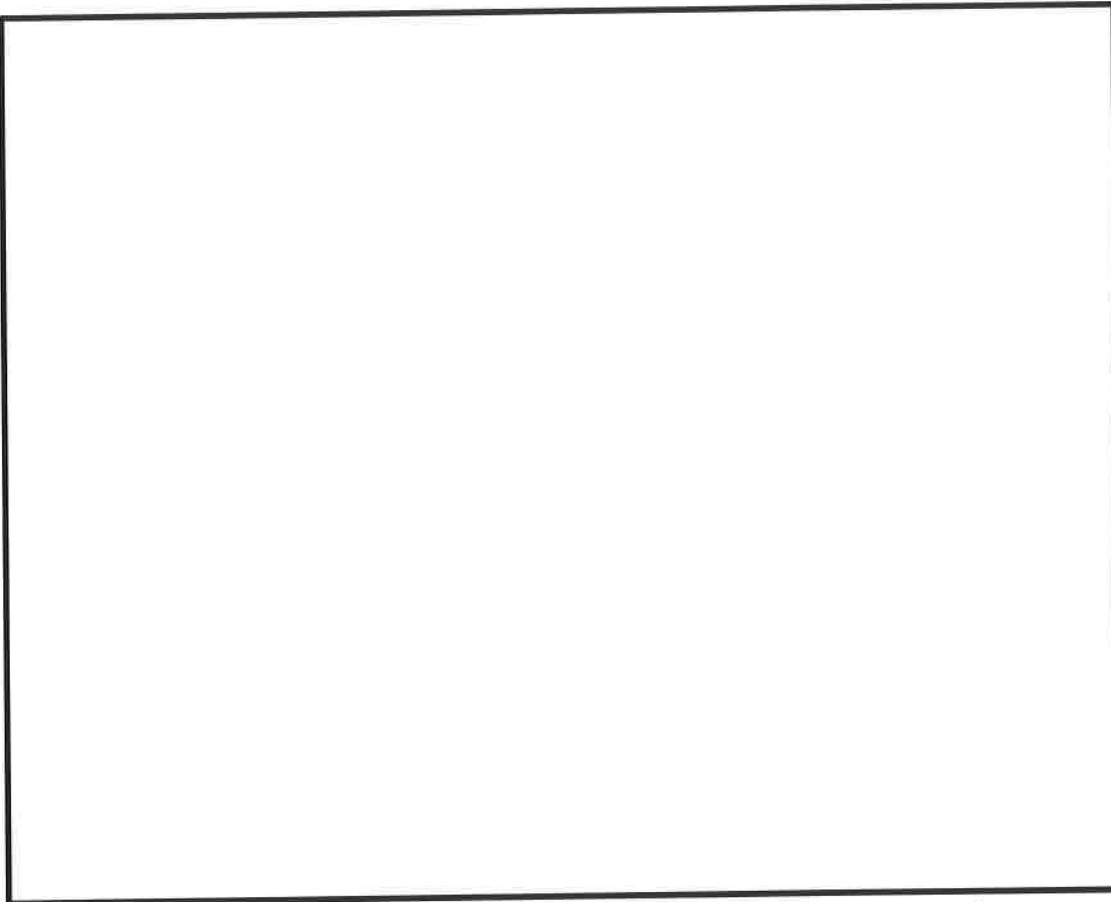
**Security – Personal Items/Money:**



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(b)(6)

**Work Schedule and Transportation:**



**Communications:**

Telephones

Sim cards were bought by most officers in Bangkok. Bangkok District office recommended the local carrier 123Call. Sim cards could be easily and inexpensively (less than 200 baht) bought in Mae Sot or Bangkok at 7-11's, where one can also find top up cards. DHS issued Blackberries worked fine throughout Thailand. Bangkok District office also issued a satellite phone to the Team Leader in the event that emergency calls were necessary in remote location (such as Tham Hin).

Internet

The [redacted] provides free WI FI internet service for the duration of the team's stay. This was the first time that such benefits were made available by this hotel to circuit riders and it was much appreciated. Team members were issued passwords for twelve hour durations at a time. In Mae Sot, multiple cafes provide free internet services.



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### Miscellaneous Matters:

#### Laptop Pilot Project

This circuit ride was one of two circuit rides (other being Jordan) chosen by HQ to initiate a Laptop Pilot Project. For this circuit ride all interviewing officers were each issued new Dell laptops by the IT department of RAIO prior to departure. The aim of the project was to ascertain the potential benefits and pitfalls of having interview notes typed and printed on one of the three portable printers that the team brought on this trip. For the Thailand team RO [REDACTED] served as the coordinator/trouble shooter during the entirety of the circuit ride. The project was a great success in the view of the team as all officers reported that the typing and printing of notes and assessments expedited the workflow noticeably. More details on the project can be found on Officer [REDACTED] Project report.

#### In Memoriam

As is often the case on Refugee Circuit Rides, some of the team members became ill during the circuit ride and had to visit the local hospital for medical assistance. This included [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. All were given medications by the resident physicians and most reported improvements during the course of the circuit ride. Tragically, however, soon after the circuit ride was over and upon her return to Los Angeles, CA [REDACTED] fell severely ill and passed away less than one month after the end of the circuit ride. It is hard to overstate the sorrow the team members felt upon learning of her passing, whose dedication to her work, gentle demeanor and sense of humor will live in our memory for a long time.

Trip Report Author: [REDACTED] SRO

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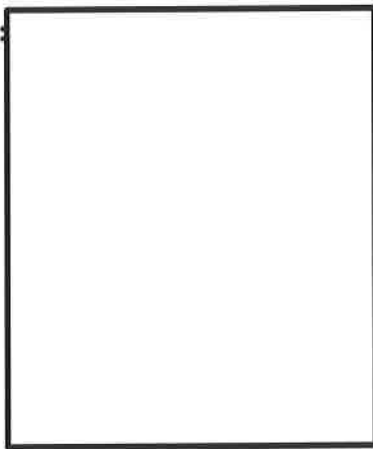
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**Refugee Processing Trip Report**  
***Thailand – Mae Sot; Mae Hong Song***  
***April 16 – May 28, 2010***  
***Extension May 28 – June 7: Tham Hin Thailand***

**Circuit Ride Basics:**

**Processing Site:** Bangkok District Office  
Mae Sot and Mae Hong Son, Thailand  
Circuit ride extension at Tham Hin camp, Thailand

**Team Composition:**



**Dates of Processing and Holidays (if applicable):**

Bangkok District Workdays: April 19-20  
Mae Sot, Thailand: April 22 – May 13 (15 interview days)  
Mae Hong Song, Thailand: May 17 – May 25 (7 interview days)  
Bangkok District Workdays: May 27, May 28  
Extension Tham Hin : June 02- June 05 (4 interview days)

Holidays: 7 May 2010 (Coronation Day Thailand)

**Travel Days:** 4/16/2010 – 4/18/2010 – US to Bangkok, Thailand  
4/21/2010 – Bangkok to Mae Sot  
5/14/2010 – 5/15/2010 – Mae Sot to Mae Hong Song  
5/26/2010 – Mae Hong Son to Bangkok  
5/28/2010 – Return US

**Processing Venue:**



**CR Extension:** Tham Hin camp, Suan Peung, Thailand May 28 – June 7, 2010

**Dates of Processing and Holidays (if applicable):**

Bangkok District Workday: May 28 (Offsite due to Thai Holiday)



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Tham Hin, Thailand: June 1 – 4 (3.5 processing days)

Holiday: May 31 (Memorial Day US)

Team Composition: Tham Hin camp, Suan Pueng, Thailand May 28 – June 7, 2010

**Case Information:****Overall Statistics:**

	Scheduled		Approved		Denied		Hold		No Show		Closed	
	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People
Total #	953	2857	832	2377	5	13	113	443	3	24		
Percentage	100.00%		83.20%		0.46%		15.51%		0.84%		0.00%	

**Cases Placed on Hold:**

	On Hold		TRIG (Waiver)		TRIG (No Waiver)		HQ Hold		TRIG W approv		Other	
	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People	Cases	People
Total #	113	443	50	66	3	3			47	63		
Percentage	100.00%		44.20%		0.26%		0.00%		14.22%		0.00%	

Notes on above charts:

These two charts include the statistics for the CR to Mae Sot and Mae Hong Son. As of report time, the following statistics were available for the CR extension to Tham Hin:

Total cases: 25 Approved: 19 Denied: 0 Hold: 6

The 113 cases on hold were mostly Class Name Check holds. The TRIG waiver cases totaled 50 cases with 66 people as there were multiple waiver individuals in some cases. Of the 50 total, all but 3 could be granted in the field. It should be noted that this TRIG waiver total is significantly less than the previous CR

The team spent the BKK District Office day after the trip lifting those cases that had previously been placed on hold.

Number of cases by priority:

P1: 5  
P2: 937  
P3: 3

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VS-92/93 8

Cases of interest representing the norm or the unusual in each hold category:

	Negussie HQ Hold: child soldier who guarded porters	
	Domestic abuse, KNPP combatant, case on hold	
		Denied various reasons
		TRIG indefinite hold

### Processing Partners:

A. OPE: International Refugee Committee (IRC)

Mae Sot: The IRC operates as the overseas processing entity in Mae Sot. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] IRC staffed the work site and provided excellent logistic support with air-conditioned workspaces and LAN access in the two, fingerprint rooms, the team leader room and two of the interview rooms.

[REDACTED]

B. UNHCR: On April 20, 2010, we were provided a pre-circuit ride briefing by representatives from UNHCR in regards to the Burmese refugee situation in Thailand, previous trends, and upcoming case loads. An IRC representative also attended.

C. DOS: One official from DOS attended the team briefing. The official reported no new developments regarding the refugee situation in Thailand.

D. Other (e.g., USCIS-IO, ICE Embassy Attaché): Embassy employees were extremely helpful during working days in the Bangkok District Office. A trip was organized to the Consulate offices to visit the cashier.

### Interpreters:

Mae Sot- A group of 11 interpreters were available for translation/interpreter services for DHS interviews in Mae Sot. Languages translated included S'gaw Karen, Karenni, Burmese, and Thai. The interpreters were a mix of Karen Thais and Burmese Karen. The quality of the interpretation was very good except for one interpreter, who was requested to assist with simpler tasks for the next circuit ride, such as fingerprinting.

(b)(6).

Mae Sot- A group of 11 interpreters were available for translation/interpreter services for DHS interviews in Mae Sot. Languages translated included S'gaw Karen, Karenni, Burmese, and Thai. The interpreters were a mix of Karen Thais and Burmese Karen.

Tham Hin - A group of 5 interpreters were available for translation/interpreter services for DHS interviews. Languages translated included S'gaw Karen and Burmese.

**Close-Out Partners Meeting:**

Co-team leaders [REDACTED] often held meetings with the team in regards to on-going processing issues pertaining to the case work. There was no official out-briefing, however issues of interest were discussed with the OPE team leaders and BKK District officers for policy clarification. All OPE team leaders were cooperative and made the trips enjoyable.

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***RAD Internal Report*****Overseas Communication Folder:**

Bangkok Adjudication statistics 04/19/10 thru 04/20/10:

Type of Adjudication	Total Number of Cases	Approved	Denied	Hold	Re-interview
I-590 Decisions upon Review	5	5			
CNC's	29	23		2	4
Baby Add-on's	10	10			
I-602 Waivers					
RFR's	30	4	26		
BID					
Marriage					
Class Hits					
Revoked Cases					

Bangkok Adjudication statistics 05/27/10 thru 05/28/10:

Type of Adjudication	Total Number of Cases	Approved	Denied	Hold	Re-interview
I-590 Decisions upon Review	106	105	1		
CNC's	49	36		13	
Baby Add-on's	48	48		1	
I-602 Waivers	1	1			
RFR's	23	5	18		
BID					
Marriage					
Class Hits				4	
Revoked Cases	5		5		

**Caseload Issues:****Description of caseload:**

Mae Sot- Just as this CR began, the team got word from HQ that a number of TRIG subgroups through an April 19, 2010 policy clarification allowed certain organizations to no longer be considered TRIG Tier III.

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Mae Hong Son- [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Tham Hin- Most cases were Karen, and had previously been no-show or had other dated issues. There was still a large no-show rate at this camp, and many withdrawals.

P2 There were 937 P-2 cases interviewed during this circuit ride.

P1 There were 5 P-1 cases interviewed during this circuit ride. They were basically expedited cases that had been granted permission to interview by the Thai authorities due to medical conditions, or other humanitarian concerns.

We did not have any re-interview cases that had been scheduled through the RFR process.

We interviewed eight V-93 cases during this circuit ride.

We interviewed three P-3 cases during this circuit ride. Even though there is a moratorium on P-3 processing, we learned that AORs received by OPE by March 2008 are still cleared for processing.

Ethnic Populations: Karen S'gaw, Karenni, Burmese (residing in various camps such as MLA, MLO, UMP, NPO in the provinces of Tak and Mae Hong Son).

#### **Trends Observed:**

This circuit ride interviewed mostly Karen applicants in various camps that have been actively processed for a number of years. As in previous circuit rides, getting responses from the applicants were at times difficult as many had lived their entire lives, or the majority of their years since young in Thailand, and thus did not have much remembrance of affairs in Burma. In addition, there were a number of applicants who registered to go to the USA, but whose parents and other siblings wanted to stay in Thailand.

#### **Suspected Fraud Trends:**

Cases and type(s) of fraud suspected: There were no significant incidences of fraud found.

#### **Other trends and issues observed during the Circuit Ride:**

This team continued to use the interview addendum question sheet which was devised during the previous circuit ride. It covers important aspects of this population, especially covering TRIG issues for greater uniformity of interviews.

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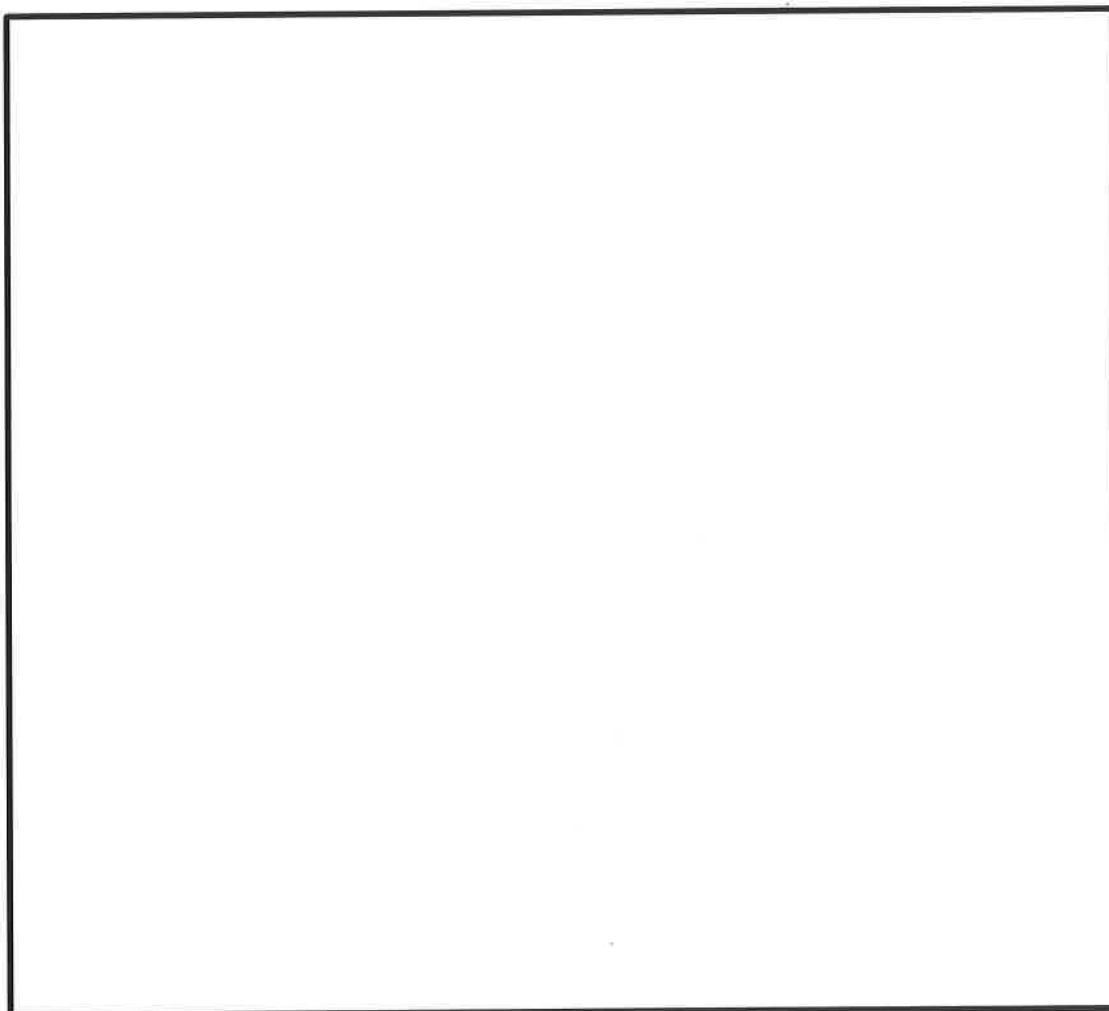
**Follow-Up Training, Policy, and Research Needs:**

**Training:**

Of the eight interviewing officers, 5 were RAD and 3 were from asylum. No one had processed Burmese cases in Thailand before. TRIG training continues to be a focus for the officers due to the complexity of the CAA regulations. Also, both fingerprinters have been on circuit rides in the past, thus not needing any additional training.

**Policy Guidance:**

Inquiries sent to RAD HQ in the following instances:



**Research (Country Conditions, etc.):**



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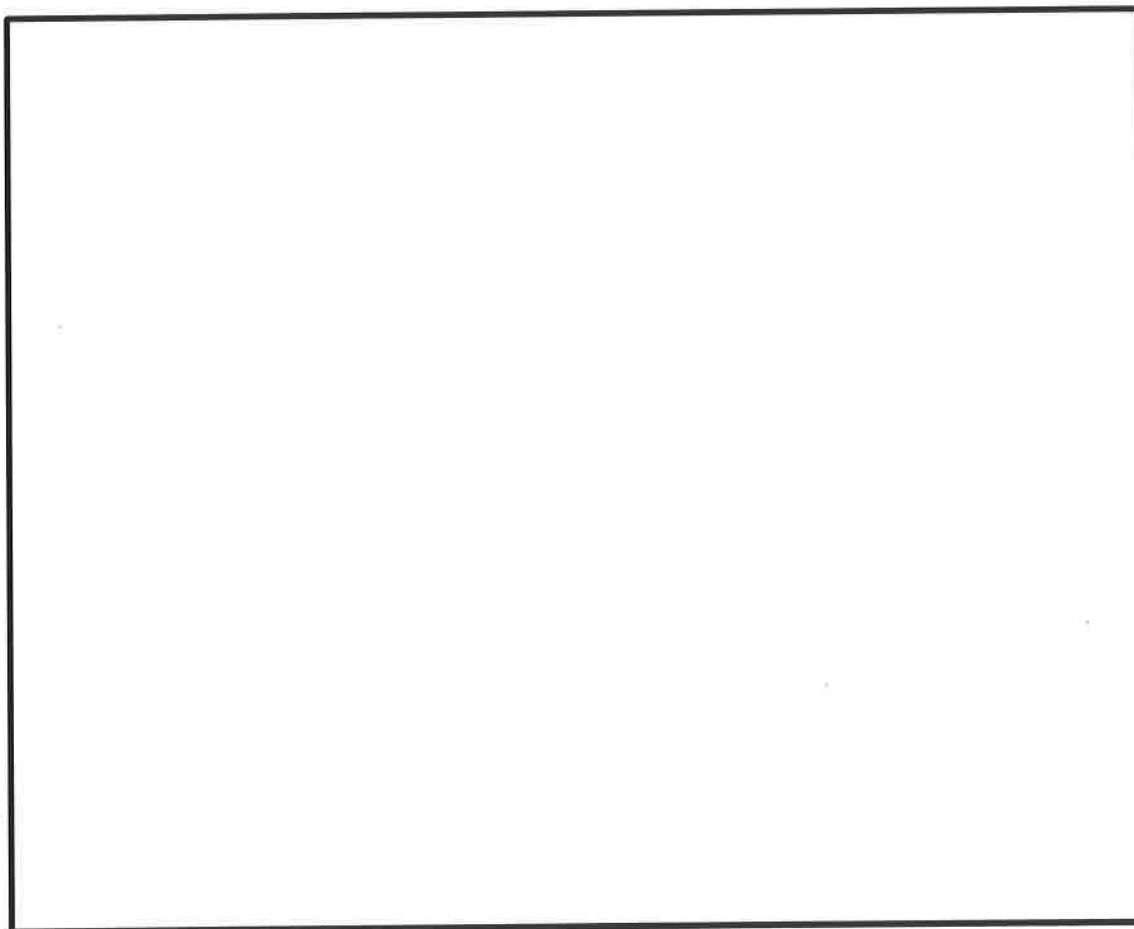
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It should be noted that it appeared that some refugee officers did not do sufficient country conditions familiarization prior to the beginning of the circuit ride.

**Logistics:**

**Travel:**

4/17/10 – 4/18/10 to Bangkok, Thailand  
04/21/10 from Bangkok to Mae Sot, Thailand  
05/14/ and 05/15/10 from Mae Sot to Mae Hong Son, Thailand  
05/26/10 travel to Bangkok, Thailand  
05/28/10 travel to USA or for Tham Hin extension volunteers, travel to USA  
06/07/10

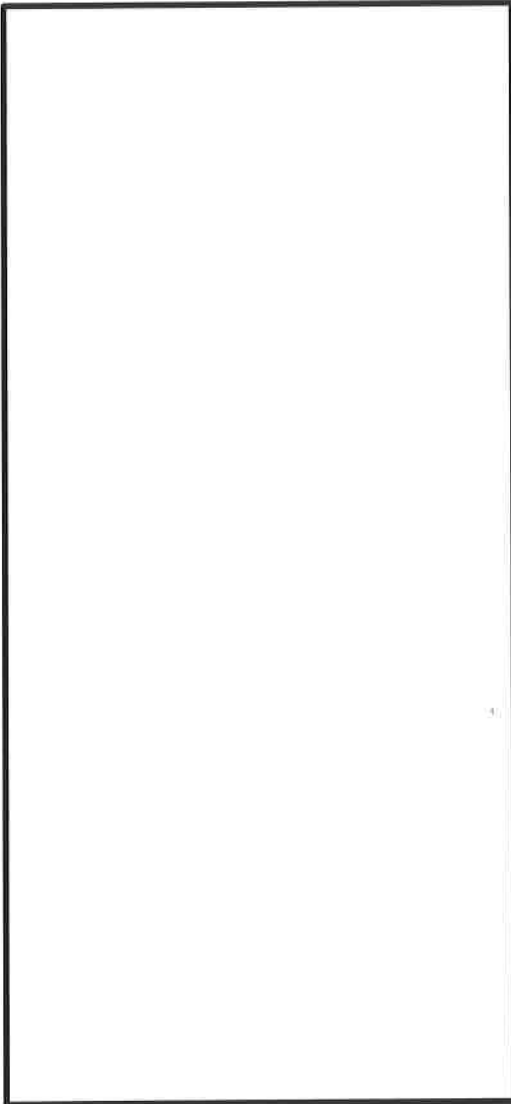


**Accommodations:**

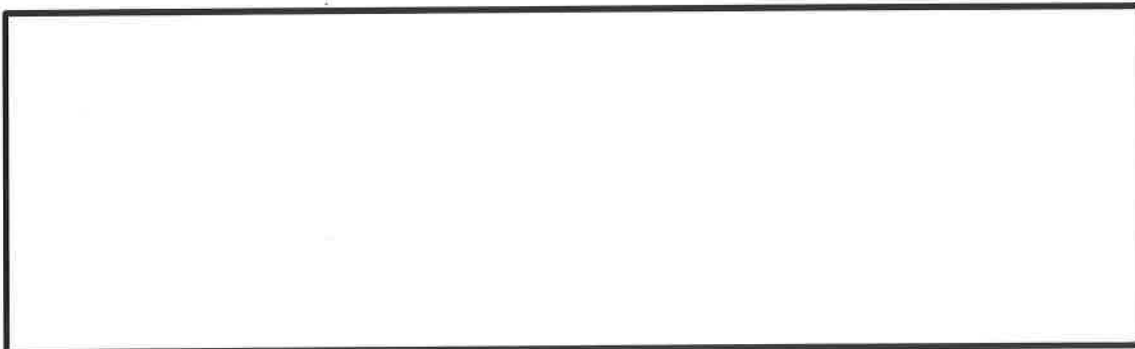


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**Security – Personal Items/Money:**



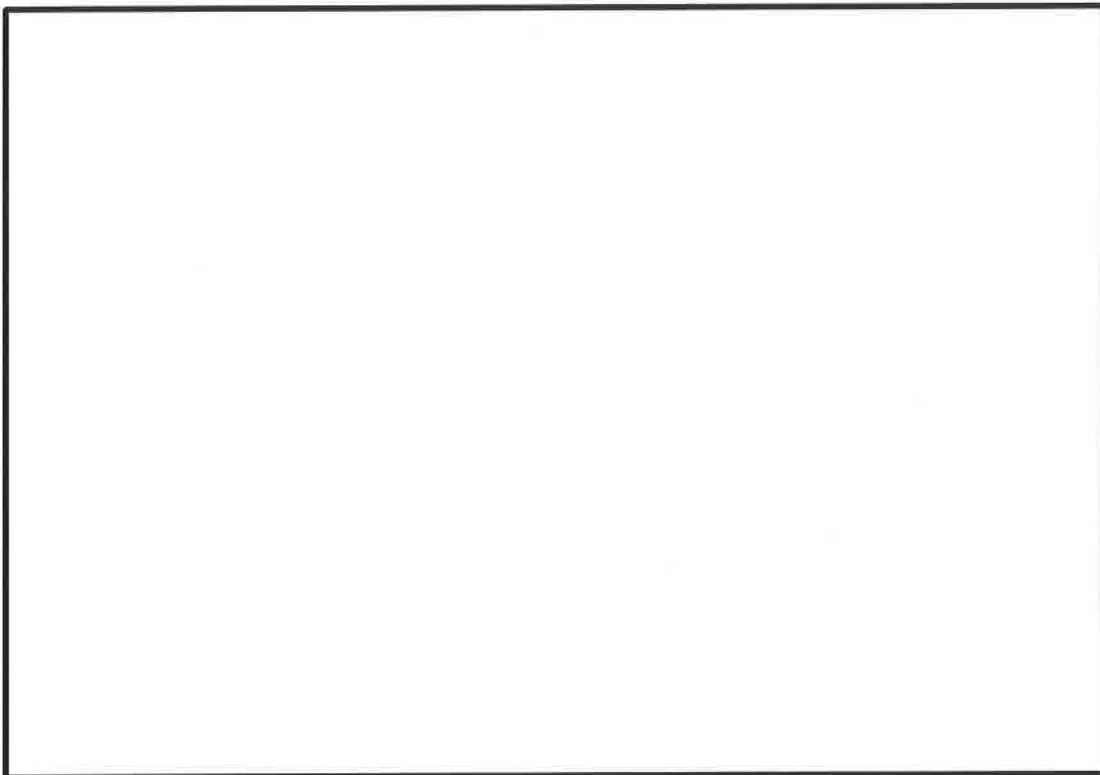
**Work Schedule and Transportation:**





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#### **Communications:**

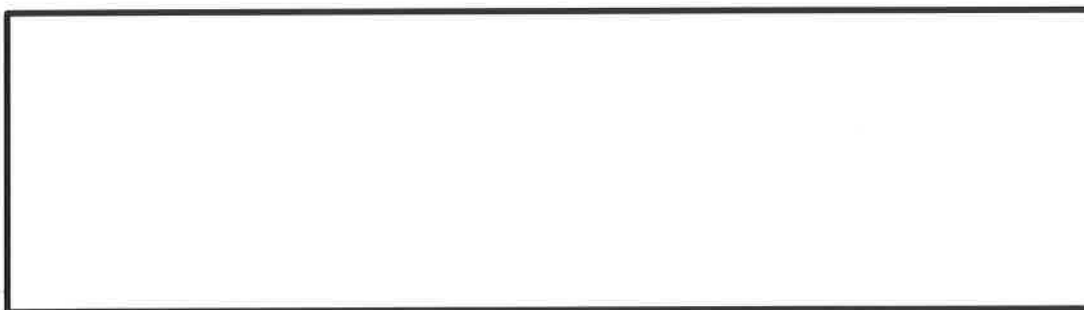
##### Telephones

Sim cards were bought by most officers in Bangkok. 123Call was used and is highly recommended as other companies may not work properly upcountry. Sim cards could be easily bought in Mae Sot or Bangkok at 7-11's, where one can also find top up cards. DHS issued Blackberries worked fine throughout Thailand.

##### Internet

The [redacted] provides WI FI internet service. The first hour was free and additional time can be purchased at the rate of 170 Baht per 2 hours. They do give a discount to team members. Otherwise, multiple cafes within the town of Mae Sot provide free internet services.

The [redacted] at Mae Hong Son has WI FI, but it had to be used in the lobby or restraint for 50Baht per hour. There were no rooms with internet access.



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Trip Report Author: [REDACTED] SRO & [REDACTED] SRO

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**Refugee Processing Trip Report  
Thailand – DHS/CIS  
March 9 – May 6, 2009**

**Place of Processing:** Tham Hin, Mae Hong Son, and Mae Sot, Thailand

**Team Composition:**

1  
2  
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6  
7  
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**Dates of Processing:** 3/12/2009 – 5/4/2009

**Travel Days:**

1. March 6, 2009 Departed USA
2. March 7, 2009 Arrived in Bangkok
3. March 8, 2009 Rest day.
4. March 9, 2009 Work day in Bangkok
5. March 10, 2009 RSO Briefing/Bangkok Workday
6. March 11, 2009 TL, FP & 3 Officers travel to Mae Hong Son
7. March 11, 2009 TL & 3 Officers travel to Tham Hin
8. March 12, 2009 Interviews begin in Tham Hin and Mae Hong Son
9. March 23, 2009 Tham Hin team travels to join rest of team in Mae Hong Son.
10. March 24, 2009 Full Team Interviews.
11. April 10, 2009 Team returns to Bangkok (2 officers interview in Chiang Mai 1/2 day).
12. April 16, 2009 Team travels to Mae Sot
13. May 4, 2009 Last day of Interviews.
14. May 5, 2009 Team returns to Bangkok
15. May 6, 2009 Work day in Bangkok
16. May 7, 2009 Return to USA.

**Processing Venue:**

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**Interpreters**

Interpreters, a pool of ten to twelve on any given day, were culled mainly from residents in the BMNS area. Most spoke Karenni and Burmese. Some held Thai citizenship even though they were ethnically Karenni. Some have other modes of employment such as farming or operating English language school for the locals. The level of English proficiency varied from interpreter to interpreter. Most varied from adequate to good, with one - who uniquely spoke a variety of minor dialects - somewhat wanting in proficiency in English. In Mae Sot, the interpreters spoke Karen, Burmese, and Po Karen. The interpreters in Mae Sot had a higher degree of language proficiency due to the length of time they have been working as interpreters.

**Communications**

All TL's and IO's purchased local SIM cards for official/personal use. There are two main wireless carriers available - 1-2-Call and Happy. It appears that the former had better coverage and was in general more reliable in overall quality. SIM cards are inexpensive - approximately 200 Baht (less than 10 USD). Team Leaders were issued one satellite phone by the Bangkok District Office for communication in emergencies and/or remote locations. The Bangkok office also provided all team members with a list of important phone numbers (Post 1, embassy hotline, District Office, Director [redacted], Deputy Director [redacted] and FOD [redacted] cell numbers).

**Caseload Issues**

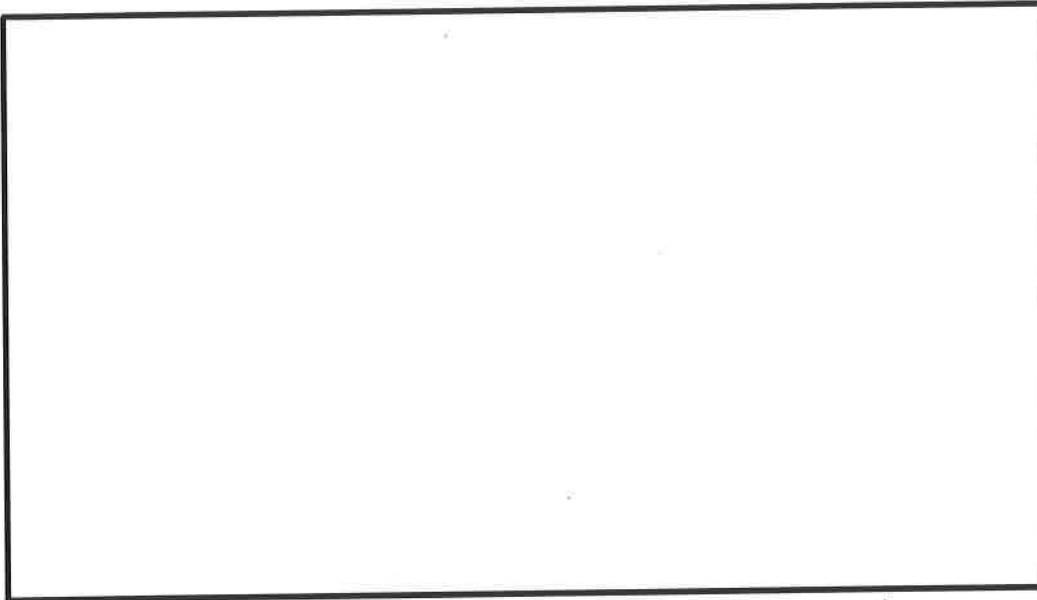
In MHS, well over 90 percent of the cases were Karenni P2's living in the BMNS camp.

[redacted] the Mae Sot caseload issues are discussed below under "trends observed."

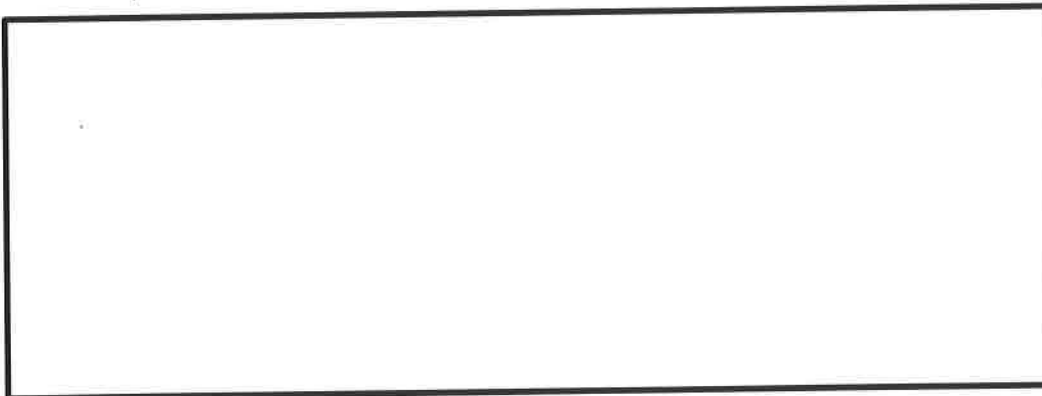
**Problems or issues with the Case Load**

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**Trends Observed**



**Other Issues**

Family Trees –

☐ Otherwise, there were few family composition issues to be resolved.

CLASS Hits - only a handful of cases received CLASS hits and they were resolved to the satisfaction of the team leaders.

RAVU Envelopes – N/A

DHS Stamps – No issue. All officers had/received Approval/Denial stamps prior to arrival:

Scheduling - No issues. No shows were replaced the same day unless team leaders requested otherwise for logistical reasons.

**Close Out Partners Meeting**

(b)(6)

There was no close out meeting with IRC. There was no formal de-briefing with the Bangkok District Office after the circuit ride. The last day of the circuit ride (in Bangkok) was spent adjudicating Waivers, RFR's and other "clean up" matters such as add-on babies.

DHS Co-Team Leader

(b)(6)

**Refugee Processing Trip Report**  
**Mae Sot, Thailand- DHS/CIS**  
**Aug 14, 2008 to Sep 26, 2008**

Place of Processing: Mae Sot, Thailand

Team Composition:

Dates of Processing: Aug 18<sup>th</sup> – Sep 26<sup>th</sup>

Travel Days: Aug 14-16 and Sept 26-27

Processing Venue: DHS/OPE (IOM) Worksite inside the city of Mae Sot in Tak Province, Thailand

Overall Statistics:

**DHS Statistics for USCIS Circuit Ride 21 Aug - 22 Sep 2008**

Case Status	Nupo		Ump		P1		Circuit Ride Totals		
	Cases	Ind	Cases	Ind	Cases	Ind	Cases	Ind	%
APP	190	396	204	539	9	11	403	946	64%
Denied	17	35	6	22	1	2	24	59	4%
Hold HQ Review	39	98	3	6	28	60	70	164	115%
Hold CNC	32	104	74	230	1	1	107	335	23%
Hold others	1	1	3	13	0	0	4	14	1%
Daily TOTALS:	279	634	290	810	39	39	608	1518	100%

Number of cases by priority:

P1: 39

P2: 569

P3: 1

Visas 92/93: 0

Cases Placed on Hold: 181

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(b)(7)(f)

Reason for hold	Number of cases	Number of individuals	%
HQ Review	70	164	11.5%
CNC	107	335	23%
Other	4	14	1%

## I. Processing Partners

A. OPE International Rescue Committee (IRC),  
 [redacted] IRC Acting Director.  
 Two Field Team Leaders from IRC.

## II. Logistics

A. Travel [redacted]  
 [redacted]

B. Hotel Accommodations [redacted]  
 [redacted]

C. Security – Personal Items/Money No incidents of loss of secured items or money occurred in either Bangkok or Mae Sot. The Team was given a security briefing by The Assistant Regional Security Officer at the US Embassy in Bangkok on Tuesday, Aug 19<sup>th</sup>. [redacted]  
 [redacted]

D. Work Schedule and Transportation: [redacted]  
 [redacted]



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Note

E. Interpreters1. Interpreters

- (A) In our first day of interview the FTL scheduled 5 cases where the applicants spoke only Chin language. There was no Chin interpreter available. When asked the FTL, he informed us that the interpreter was on his way. The interpreter arrived at 1:00 PM.
- (B) Three officers who used the interpreter's services came to the team leader individually and complained about his language skills. They indicated he did not understand the dialect of the applicants, plus he was not fluent in English. All officers agreed that they didn't feel the applicants were given a fair opportunity to present their cases due to translation problems.

The team leader, "after consulting" the three officers decided to re-interview all 5 cases using a different interpreter. The T.L. asked OPE to provide a different chin interpreter and re-schedule the cases for a later date. All 5 applicants have been re-interviewed during the same circuit ride. All of them received a fair opportunity to present their claims.

(B) The team leader held a meeting with IRC FTL after he received complaints about the Arakanese language only interpreter. Two officers stated he, improperly, engaged in conversations with applicants and, apparently did not translate what the applicants had said. The interpreter admitted the wrong doing and promised to follow the guidelines in future interviews. The DHS team leader and IRC FTL agreed that interpreter needs more training by IRC. IRC FTL stated he would refer the matter to his superiors in Bangkok.

F. Communications Communication in Bangkok, Mae Sot was fairly good both for local, long distance and international calls. Cell phones, sym cards and calling cards are inexpensive and readily available in Thailand, including in Mae Sot. There are a few companies that provide cell phone service; Happy and One Two Call were the most common. Happy seemed the most economical, but One Two Call worked in the most locations (Happy did not have a signal at the worksite, a distinct disadvantage). IRC provided Internet Services for the team leader during work hours. It was very helpful in communicating with the Desk Officer in Washington and BKK. The Government Issued Lap top worked very well. Internet service is available in town for very good rates

(b)(6)

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(b)(7)(f)

(20BHT an hour). The Hotel provides internet service as well. Residents have a choice between buying WI FI access, or use the Hotel's equipment. They charge 90 BHT per hour.

### III. Caseload Issues

#### 1. Unaccompanied Minors and BIDs;

2.

3.

#### 2. Case Composition:

Some cases were not composed in compliance with 1999 Memo. Unaccompanied minors who were not part of the same household and the same economic unit in the country of origin must have their own cases regardless of age.

#### 4. OPE statements that do not match PA's testimony:

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#### 4. P1 Cases;

There were a significant number of P1 cases {28 totals}.

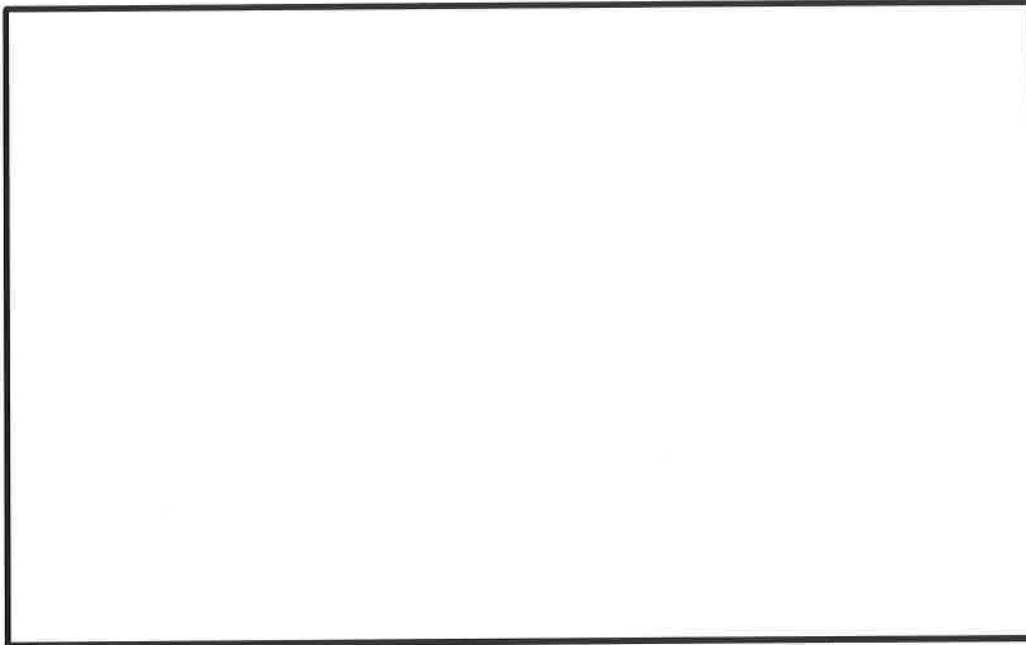
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**5. Cases on Hold for Class Name Checks (CNC):**



**E. Scheduling**

Six interviews per RO per day fully consumed an 8 hour day and the Team worked overtime on during the detail to accomplish the workload especially when two officers called in sick at the same day.

The team was able to interview all cases scheduled for the circuit ride.

**V. End of Circuit Ride Debriefing:**

The team leader prepared a brief report and presented it to Bangkok District Director at the end of the circuit ride.



SRO/DHS Team Leader

Supervisory Refugee Officer  
Refugee Affairs Division  
Office of Refugee, Asylum and International Operations  
USCIS  
DHS



(b)(6)

Refugee Processing Trip Report  
*Mae La, Thailand*– DHS/CIS  
 March 12<sup>th</sup> – April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Place of Processing: Mae La, Thailand

Team Composition

Dates of Processing: March 15<sup>th</sup> – April 25<sup>th</sup>

Travel Days: March 9-10 and April 26-27

Processing Venue:

Overall Statistics:

	Scheduled Cases	Approved Cases/Indiv.	Denied Cases/Indiv.	HOLD Cases/Indiv.	Closed Cases/Indiv	No Show
Total Number	560	309/726	8/24	203/786	0	39
Percentage		59%	2%	39%		

Number of cases by priority:

P1: 0

P2: 559

P3: 1

Visas 92/93: 0

Cases Placed on Hold: 203cases/786 individuals

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**I. Processing Partners**

A. OPE

B. UNHCR

C. DOS

**II. Logistics**

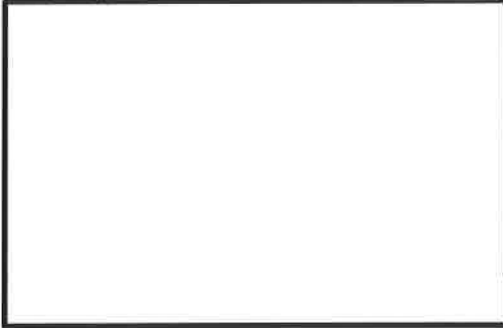
A. Travel

B. Hotel Accommodations

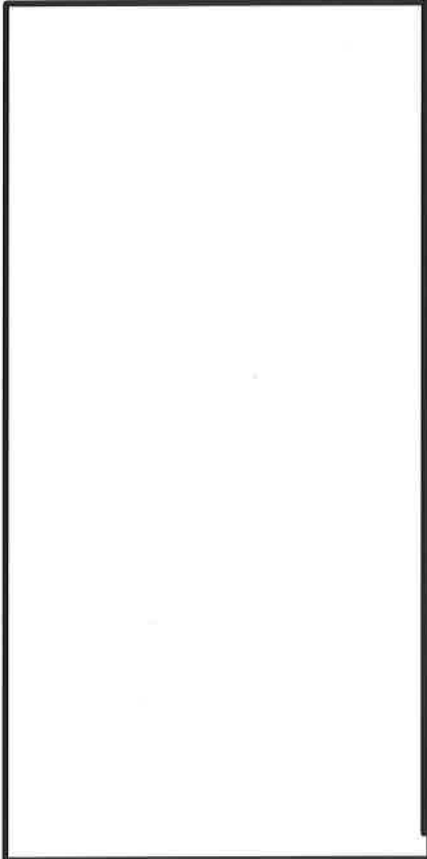
(b)(7)(f)

Road from May 7-9, while processing material support waivers at the Bangkok USCIS office.

C. Security – Personal Items/Money

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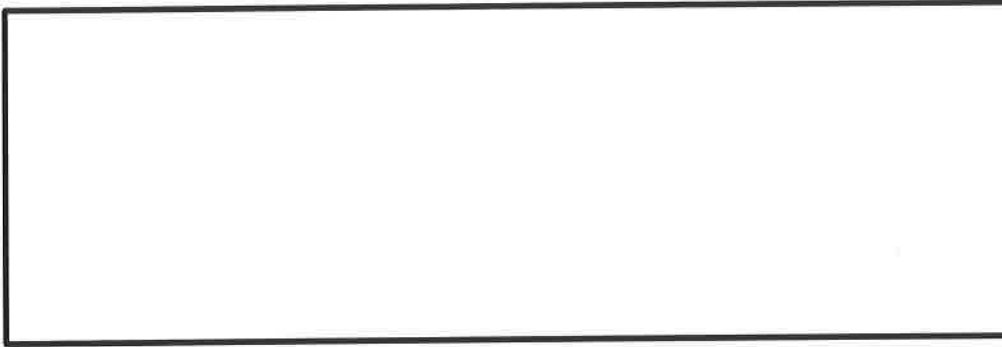
During the weekend of April 7-8 attacks by the combined forces of the Burmese military and the DKBA (with the assistance of the breakaway KNLA faction known as the KNLA-Peace Council) took the 101<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> HQ of the KNU just across the Thai border in Burma:

A large rectangular black box used to redact information following the paragraph about the April 7-8 attacks.A large rectangular black box used to redact information following the paragraph about the April 7-8 attacks.

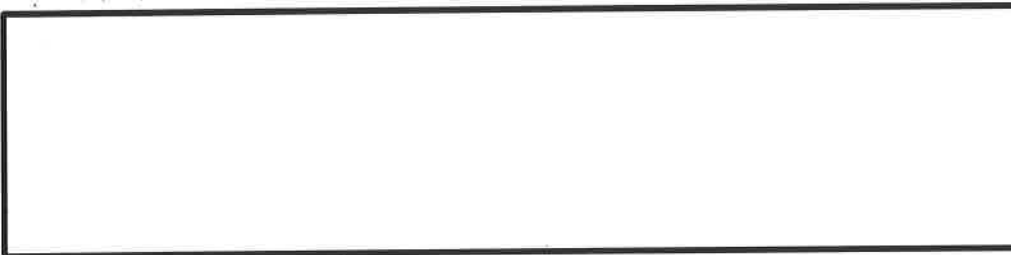
D. Work Schedule and Transportation

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E. Interpreters Interpreters for DHS interviews were Burmese nationals who were students in Thailand (either from Bangkok, Chiang Mai or Mae Sot) hired by OPE and were generally quite good. There was need for Karen S'gaw, Karen Pyo, and Burmese interpretation depending on the applicant's ethnicity and background. OPE provided orientation/training to the interpreters, although the scope of that training is not known. One interpreter, whose language skills were not adequate for our work, was let go by the OPE during our detail.



F. Communications Communication in Bangkok, Mae Sot and Mae La was fairly good both for local, long distance and international calls. Cell phones, sym cards and calling cards are inexpensive and readily available in Thailand, including in Mae Sot. There are a few companies that provide cell phone service, Happy and One Two Call were the most common. Happy seemed the most economical, but One Two Call worked in the most locations (Happy did not have a signal at the worksite, a distinct disadvantage). The satellite phone provided for emergencies by the USCIS office in Bangkok did not work at the worksite. However, this did not present any problems as everyone's personal cell phones did work at the interview site.

Internet in the room at the [redacted] was a dial-up connection and too slow to be used. There was one high-speed internet terminal at the hotel for the cost of 90 Baht (\$2.75) per hour and was not available in less than one-hour increments.

### III. Caseload Issues

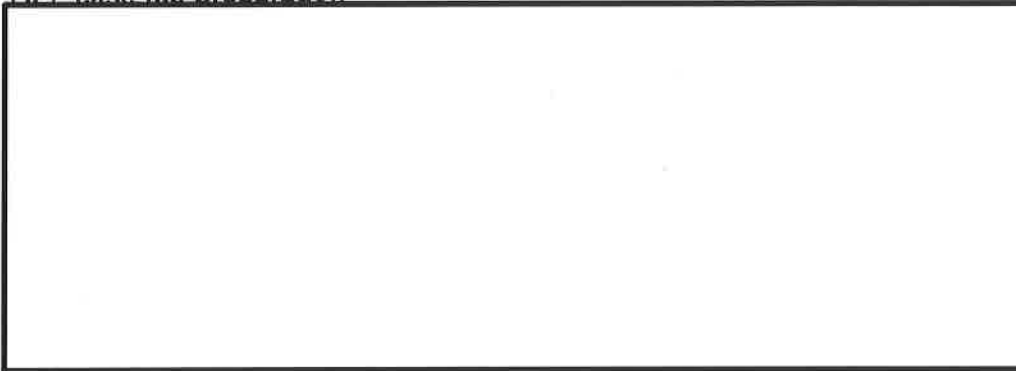
A. Description of Case Load The Team interviewed 521 cases/1,537 individuals, and all cases but one were P-2 cases (Burmese nationals registered

(b)(7)(e)

by UNHCR in Mae La refugee camp in Thailand). One case was a P-3 medical expedite case. The majority of the applicants were ethnic Karen, but there were also a significant number of Burmese Muslims applicants who had previously resided in Karen State. There were a few Burmese, Mon and Rohingya applicants as well.

B. Problems or issues with Case Load

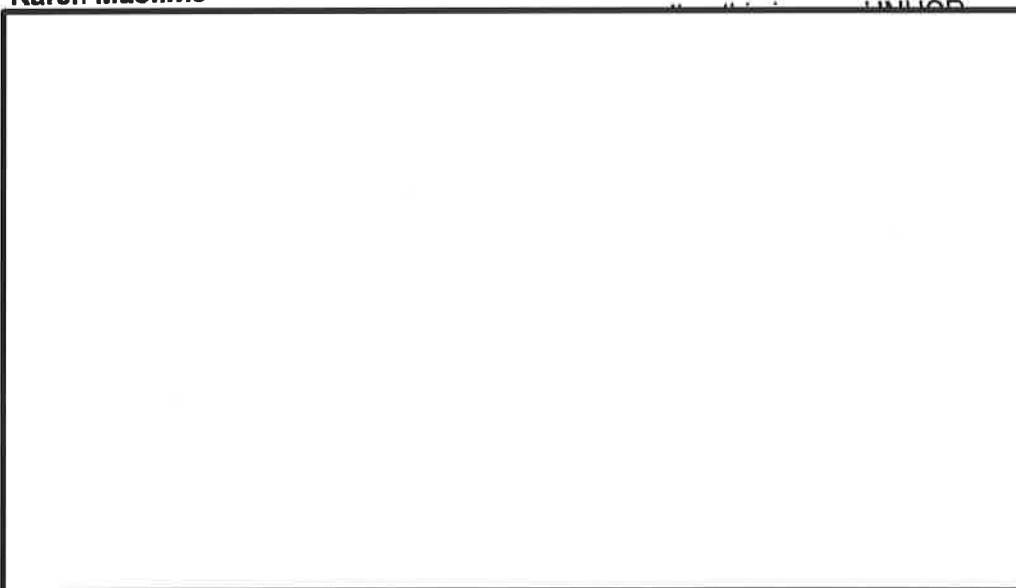
OPF case file preparation

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Marriage Issues

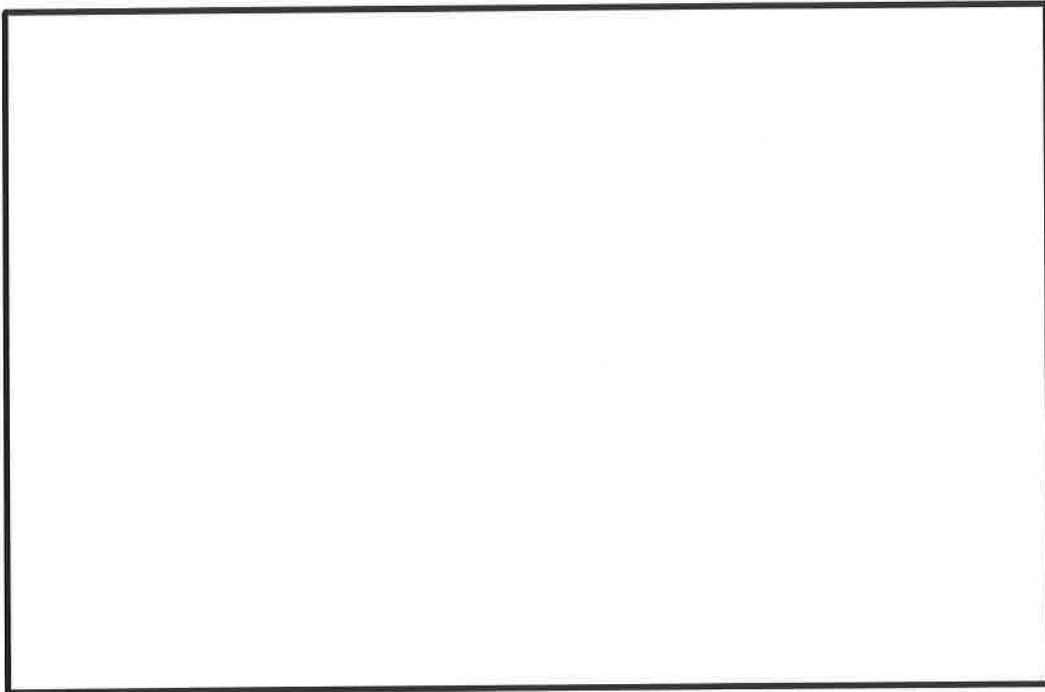
A large rectangular black box redacting the content of the Marriage Issues section.

Karen Muslims

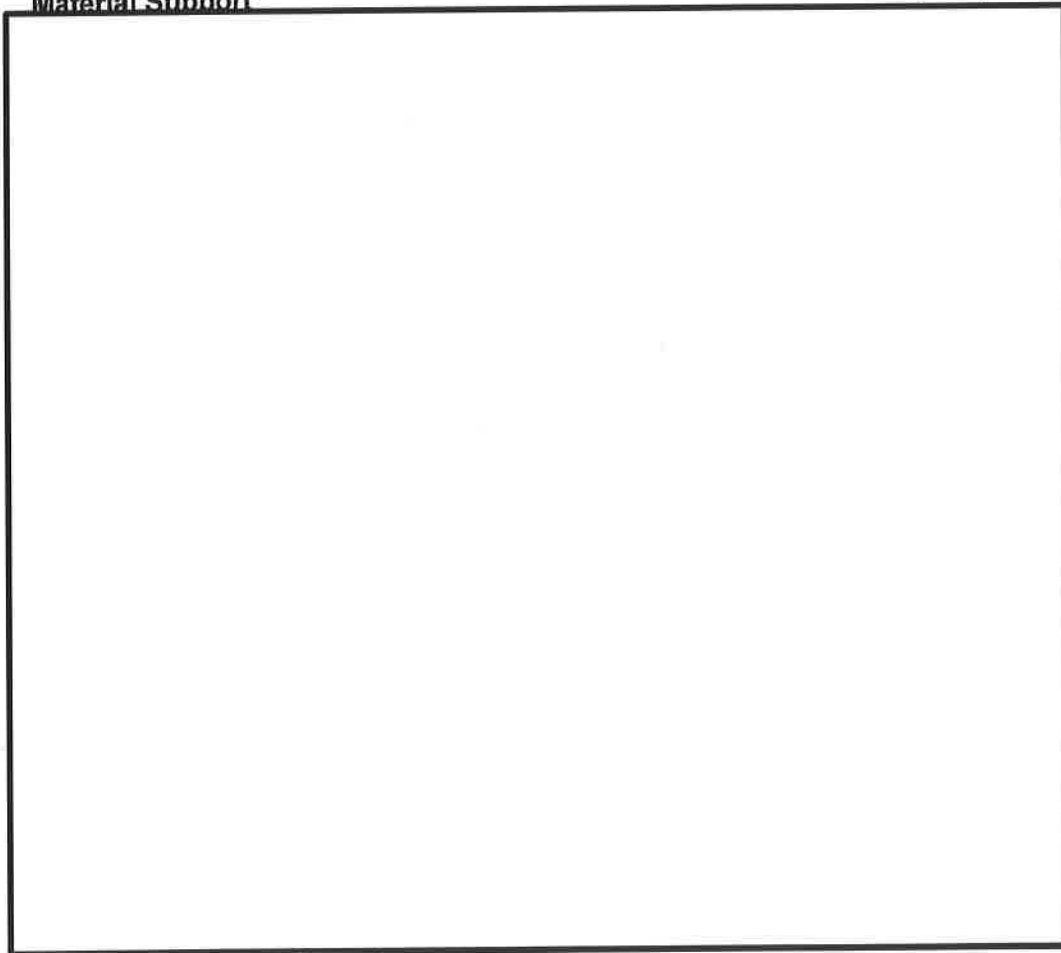
A large rectangular black box redacting the content of the Karen Muslims section.



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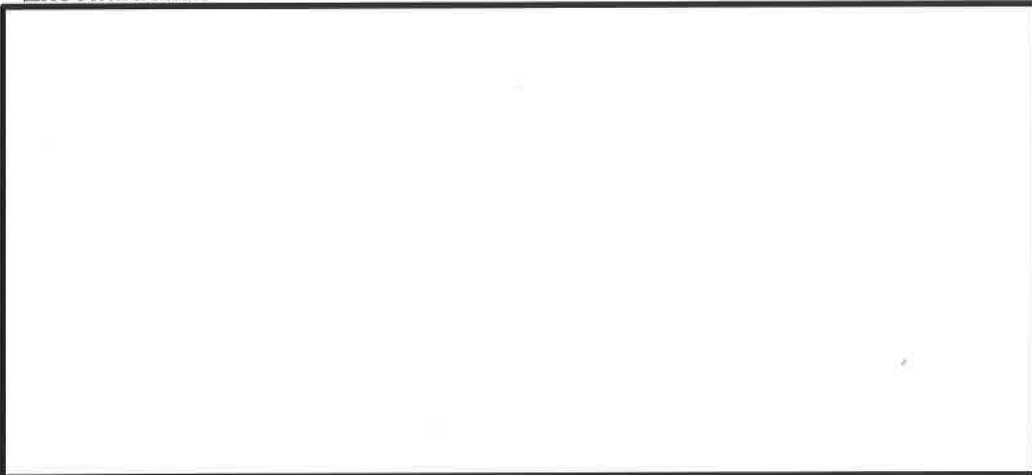
**Material Support**



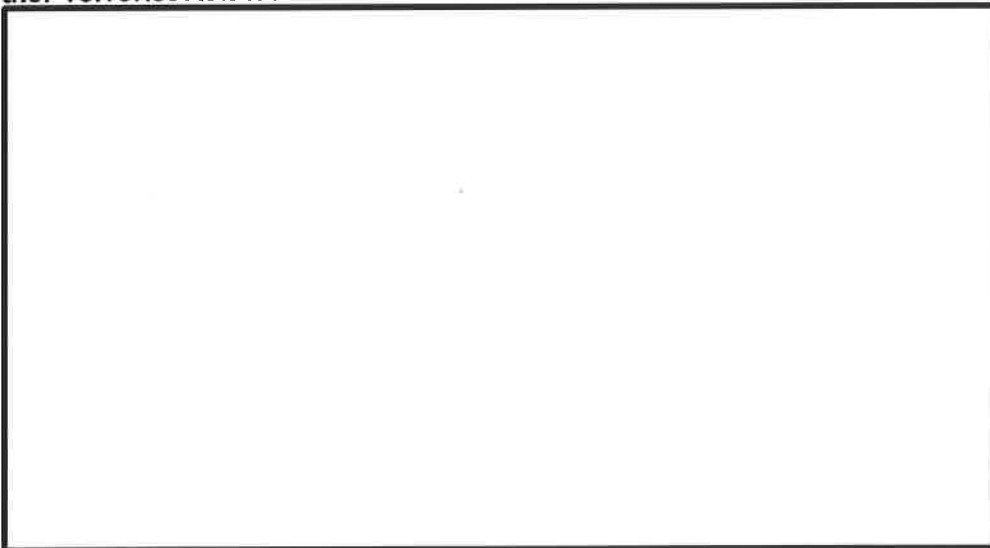
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**Excombatants**

A large rectangular box with a black border, completely empty, representing redacted content.

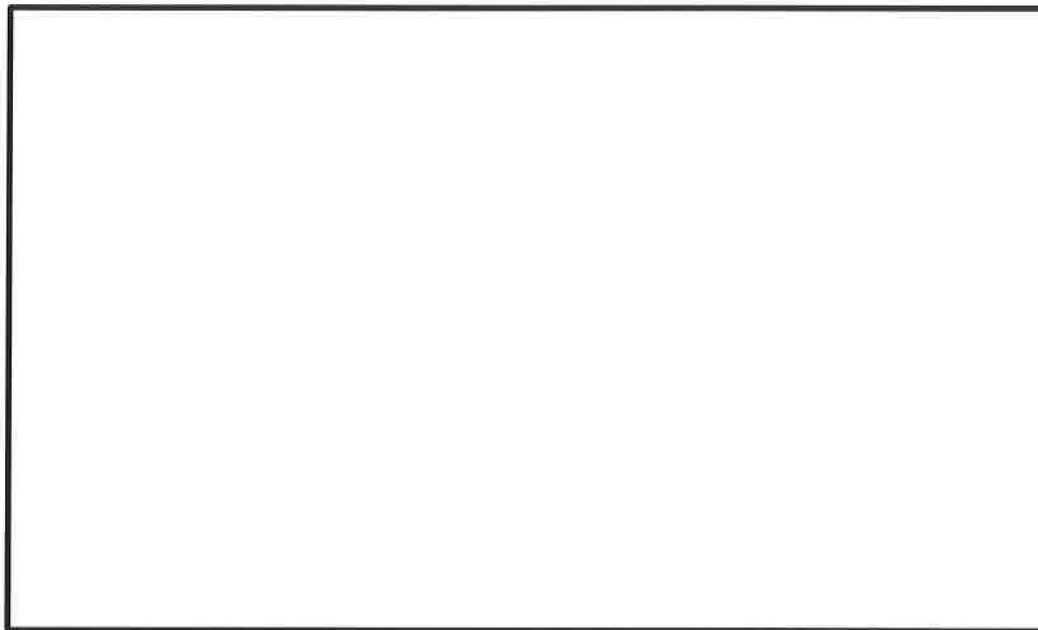
**Other Terrorist Related Inadmissibilities**

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**Persecutors**

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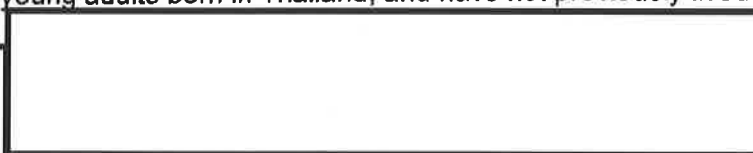
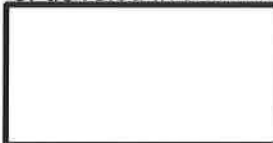


### C. Trends Observed

The Burmese refugee populations of Tham Hin and Mae La appear to be quite different in terms of the length of time spent in the camp (many in Mae La came in the 80's and many were born there and have never lived in Burma vs. Tham Hin where most arrived in mid-90s or after). There is also a significant difference in how refugee were identified by the UNHCR for resettlement, the entire population of the Tham Hin camp was referred for resettlement vs. Mae La where only the refugees themselves have specifically expressed interest in resettlement.

#### Young population

Many applicants are young adults born in Thailand, and have not previously lived or traveled in Burma.



### IV. Other Issues

#### A. Family Trees



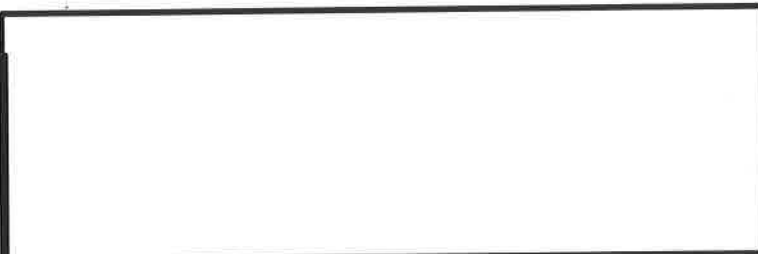
(b)(5)

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B. CLASS Hits We adjudicated CLASS hits for handful of cases. . None of the CLASS hits were determined to be related to the applicants we interviewed.

C. RAVU Envelopes We interviewed only 1 P-3 case, so we faced no RAVU problems on this circuit ride.

D. DHS Stamps



E. Scheduling Six interviews per RO per day fully consumed an 8 hour day and the Team worked 1-2 hours overtime on a few days during the detail to accomplish the workload. It is not recommended that the interview case rate be raised to 7 per day. We did experience problems with the OPE being able to schedule cross-referenced cases on the same day so that they could be assigned to the same RO.

V. **Close-Out Partners Meeting** - Not held

 RO/DHS Team Leader

(b)(6) :

(b)(7)(e)

**Refugee Processing Trip Report**  
*Tham Hin Refugee Camp, Thailand– DHS/CIS*  
 May 30<sup>th</sup> – July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006

Place of Processing: Tham Hin Refugee Camp, Suan Phueng, Thailand

Team Composition:

Dates of Processing: June 5<sup>th</sup> – July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Travel Days: May 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> and July 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>

Processing Venue: Tham Hin Refugee Camp  
 Suan Phueng, Thailand

**Overall Statistics:**

	Scheduled Cases / People	Approved Cases / People	Denied Cases / People	HOLD Cases/People	No Show/Closed Cases / People
Total Number	1033 / 3773	714 / 2519	8 / 20	254 / 1117	57 / 117
Percentage		69.12%	0.77%	24.59%	5.52%

NOTE:

NOTE: Of the 254 cases on hold, there were 154 cases where it was determined that the principal applicant on the case was inadmissible pursuant to 212(a)(3)(B) of the Act

The remaining cases were put on hold either for CLASS checks to be completed or for additional documentation (marriage certificates, BIDs, birth certificates) to be provided.

**Number of cases by priority:**

P1: 1  
 P2: 1032  
 P3: 0  
 V92/93: 0

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***I. Processing Partners***

A. OPE

B. UNHCR

C. DOS

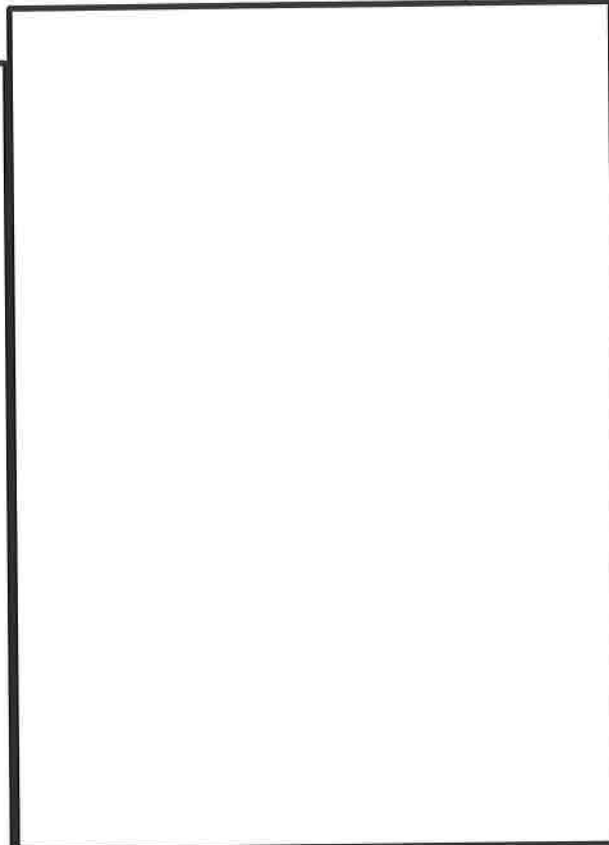
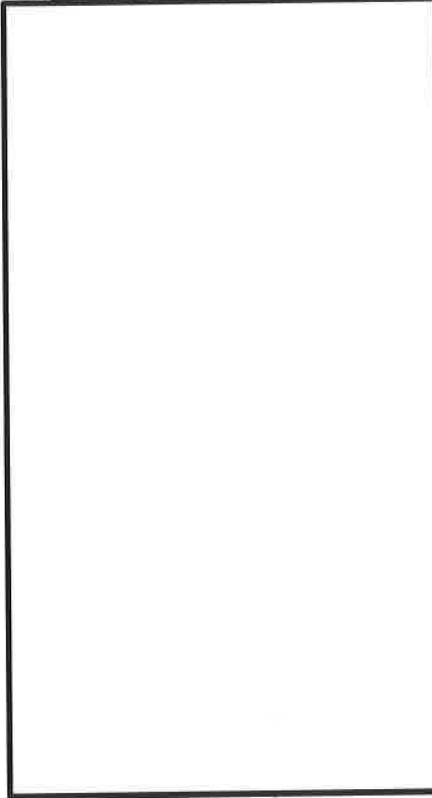
***II. Logistics***

A. Travel

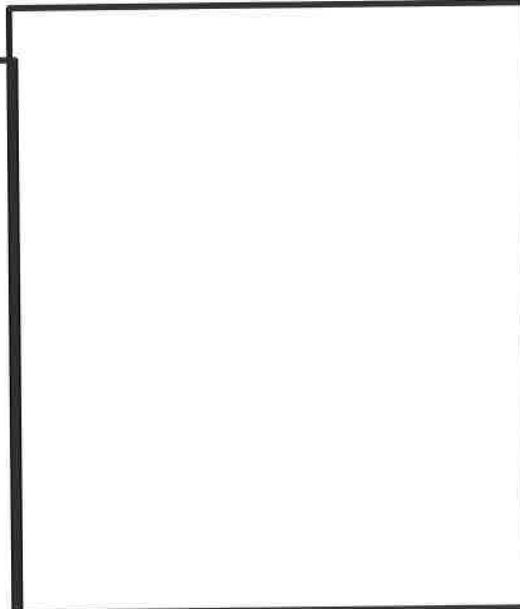
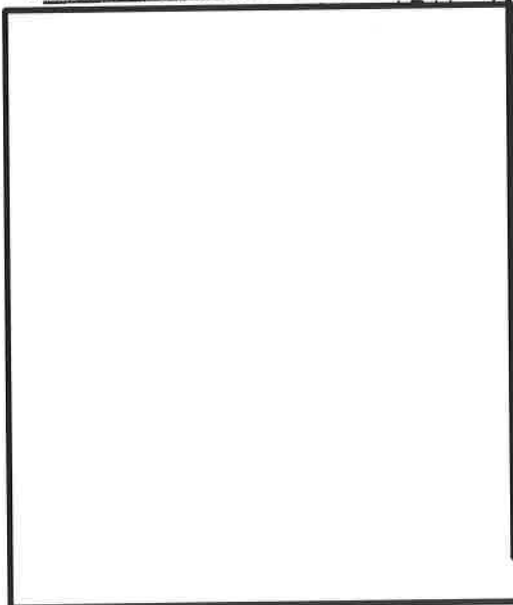
B. Hotel Accommodations

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C. Security – Personal Items/Money



D. Work Schedule and Transportation



E. Interpreters      The OPE hired seven interpreters the week before the team began interviewing. All received training from the OPE and none were in the USRP. All team members reported that the interpreters were professional and did a good job.

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(b)(7)(f)

F. Communications Cell phone connection at the [REDACTED] is excellent. Team members purchased SIM cards in Bangkok and had no trouble making or receiving phone calls at the resort. Using the prefix "0091" team members were able to phone the United States for about \$10/hour. There is no internet access at the [REDACTED]. The team was told that there was an internet café in a town about 15-20 minutes away, but that it was a slow dial-up connection. No team members tried this option. There is no cell phone or internet service at the processing site. BKK provided the team leader with a satellite phone in case of emergency.

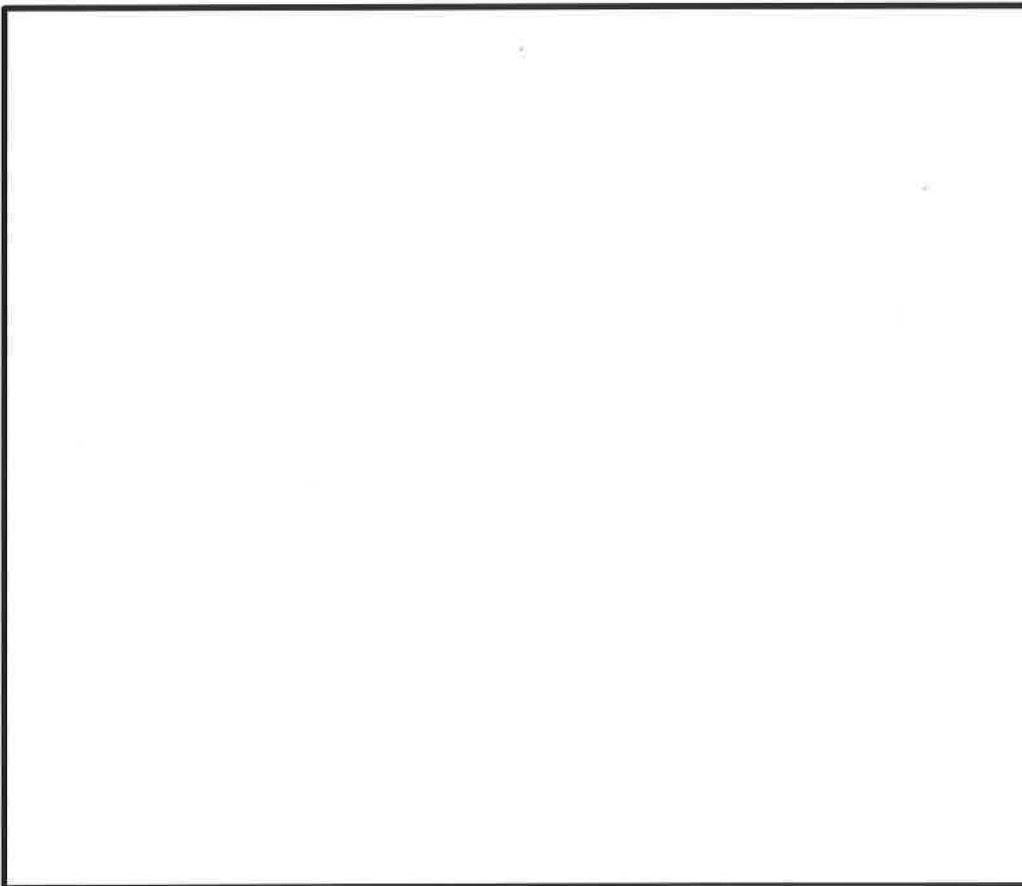
The [REDACTED] had internet access in the hotel rooms for \$20/day. There is free wi-fi access poolside, and there are plenty of internet cafés around the city with cheaper access than that offered in the room. Also, on weekends when the team worked on Saturday, the team would go to Hua Hin on Sunday where there was also an excellent, inexpensive internet café.

### ***III. Caseload Issues***

#### **A. Description of Case Load**

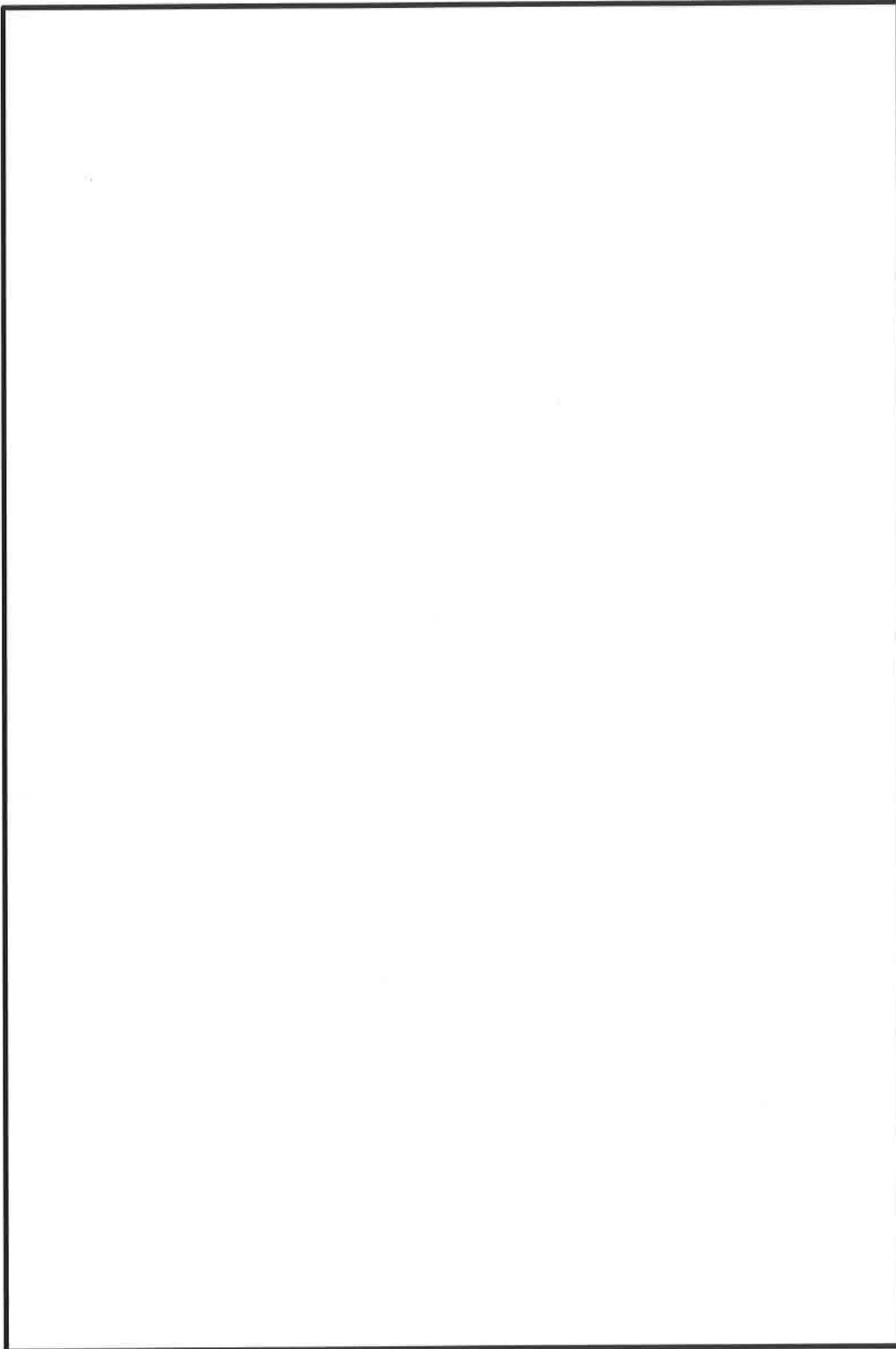
The vast majority of the cases were Burmese of Karen ethnicity. There were a handful of ethnic Burmese and a couple of Burmese Mon.

#### **B. Problems or issues with Case Load**





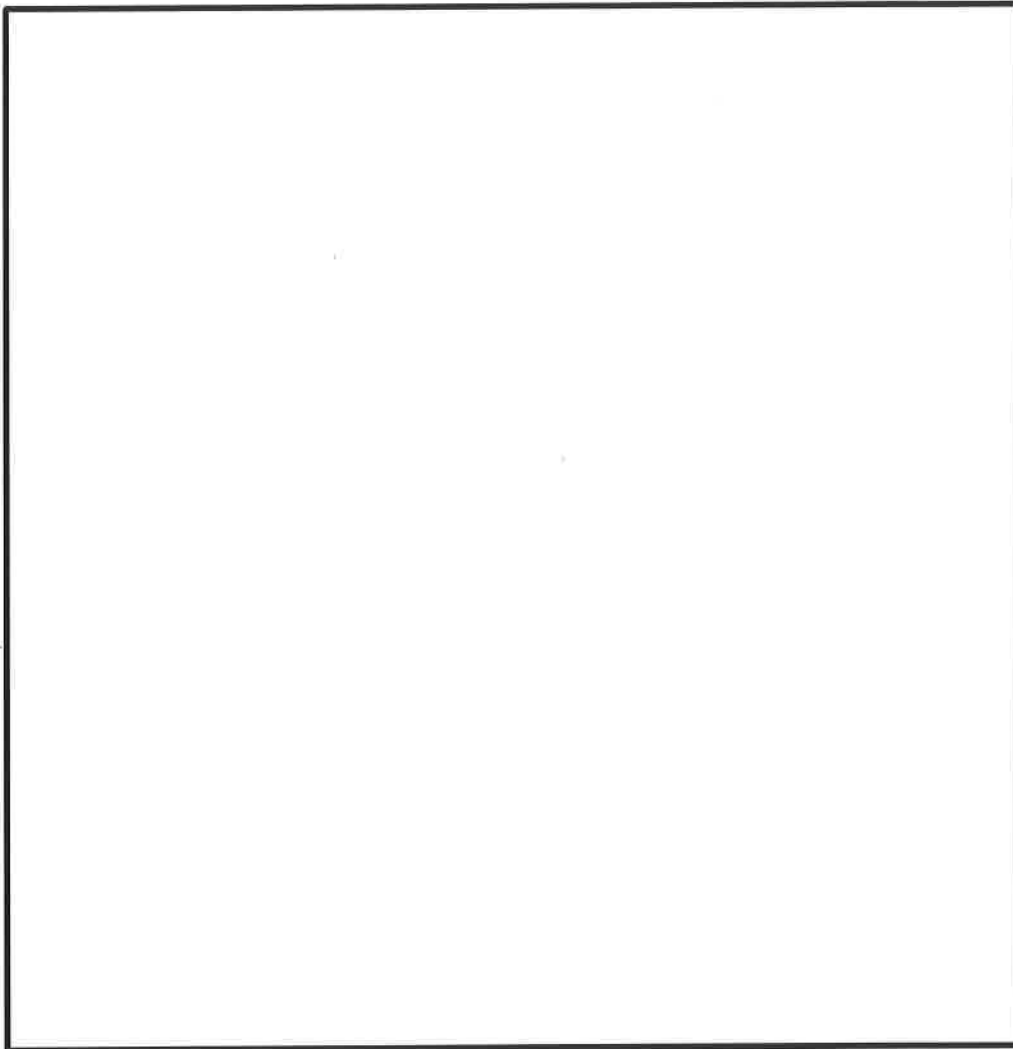
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C. Trends Observed



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#### ***IV. Other Issues***

A. Family Trees No problems with the family trees included in the files. The OPE was using the handwritten family trees (as opposed to the new WRAPS-generated family trees). This was a good thing.

B. CLASS Hits Two cases presented to the team included CLASS hit envelopes. In both instances, it was determined that the hit did not relate to the applicant.

C. RAVU Envelopes N/A

D. DHS Stamps In order to ensure that only those cases that were approvable at the time of interview were stamped with the approval stamp, officers presented their cases for review by the team leader prior to stamping. While this did create a bit of back-and-forth, the system worked out well.

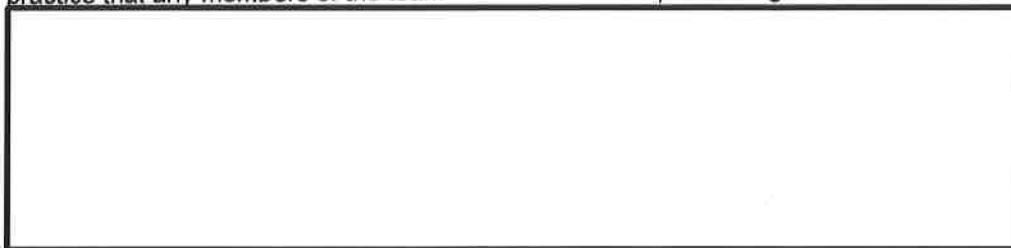
The travel packet envelope was already included in the file at the time of interview. OPE indicated that BKK places an approval stamp on the envelope and writes down how many RE-1s, 2s, and 3s are included on the case under their stamp. This is not a

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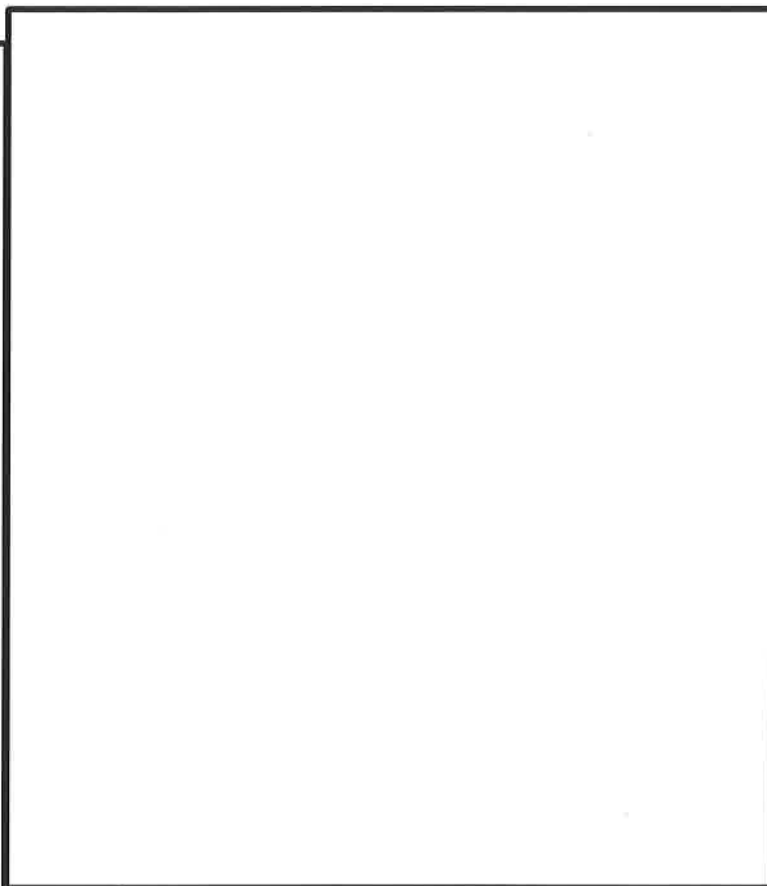
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(b)(6)

practice that any members of the team had seen at other processing locations, and at



E. Scheduling



Team Leader

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**UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE**  
Office of International Affairs – Refugee Division  
WASHINGTON

**MEMORANDUM****DATE:** June 21, 2001**FROM:**  Refugee Officer**TO:**  OIC, INS Nairobi**SUBJECT:** NOMAD.3 Trip Report – Rwanda, Madagascar, Togo, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Mali

**Processing Locations:** A total of 44/122 refugee cases/individuals were interviewed and adjudicated on this circuit ride. Results are listed as follows by location, date, priority, nationality, case size, decision and comment:

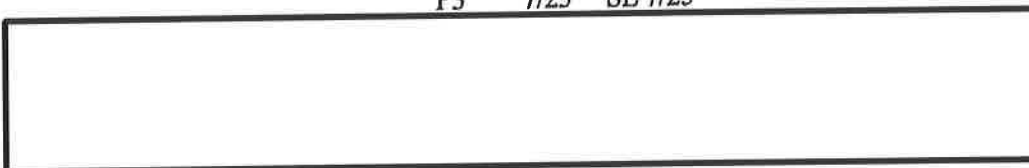
**Kigali, Rwanda** May 04 P1 7/19 CG 3/11; ET 3/3; BY 1/5  
- All but BY 1/5 were approved.

**Antananarivo, Madagascar** May 08 P1 7/16 RW 3/5; CF 1/1; CG 3/10  
- All but RW 1/1 were approved.

**Lome, Togo** May 14 P1 1/1 RW 1/1  
" P3 4/8 NI 4/8  
- P1 RW 1/1 approved, two minors deferred. See IO notes in case file.  
- P3 NI 2/3 approved. P3 NI 2/5 denied – both principals left Nigeria in the 1960s during the Biafran secession and have lived in Togo since. Both cases were denied as having no past persecution or well-founded fear.

**Abidjan, Ivory Coast** May 17 P1 3/10 LI 2/9; CG 1/1  
- All cases approved.

**Dakar, Senegal** May 21 P1 1/5 RW 1/5  
" P3 7/25 SL 7/25



(b)(6)

Trip Report – Rwanda, Madagascar, Togo,  
Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali

Page 2



P3 SL 6/19 approved. P3 SL 1/6 denied.

<b>Dakar (Continued)</b>	May 22	P1	1/3	LI 1/3
	"	P3	8/19	SL 6/16; RW 2/3

- All approved
- Combined two RW cases containing two PA sisters into one case. Eldest sister was obviously mentally challenged and in need of younger sister's care and assistance and needed for the care and assistance of a small child of the eldest sister.

<b>Bamako, Mali</b>	May 24	P1	4/10	SL 4/10
	"	P3	1/6	LI 1/6

- P1 SL 4/10 approved.
- P3 LI 1/6 denied.

**Principal Contacts:**  
**Kigali, Rwanda:**

**Antananarivo, Mdg.:**

**Lome, Togo:**



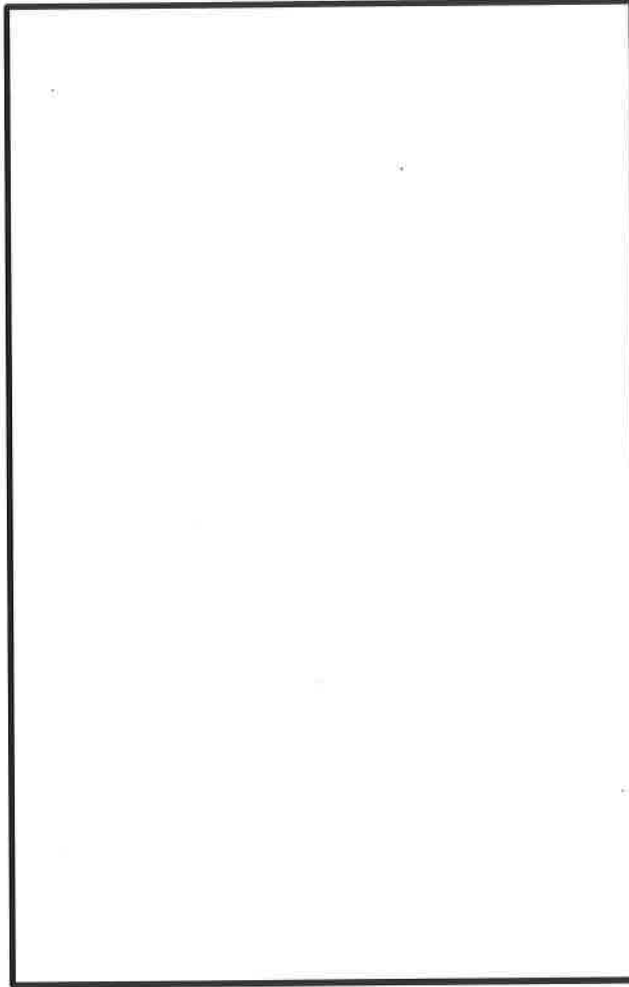
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Page 3

Trip Report – Rwanda, Madagascar, Togo,

(b)(7)(e) Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali

(b)(7)(f) Abidjan, Ivory Coast:



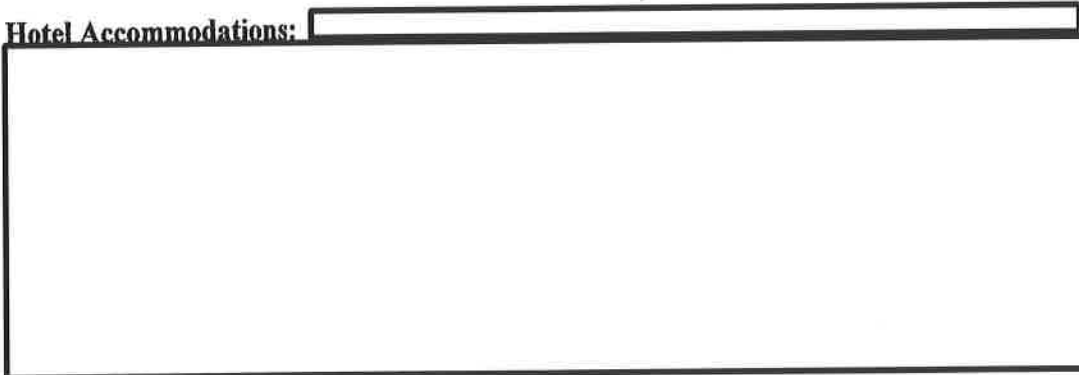
Dakar, Senegal:

Bamako, Mali:

General Description of Interview Locations:



Hotel Accommodations:



Page 4

(b)(7)(e) Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali

**JVA:** Overall, case files were well-prepared. JVA Dakar Sub-Office appeared very well organized and well managed. [REDACTED]

**UNHCR:**

59

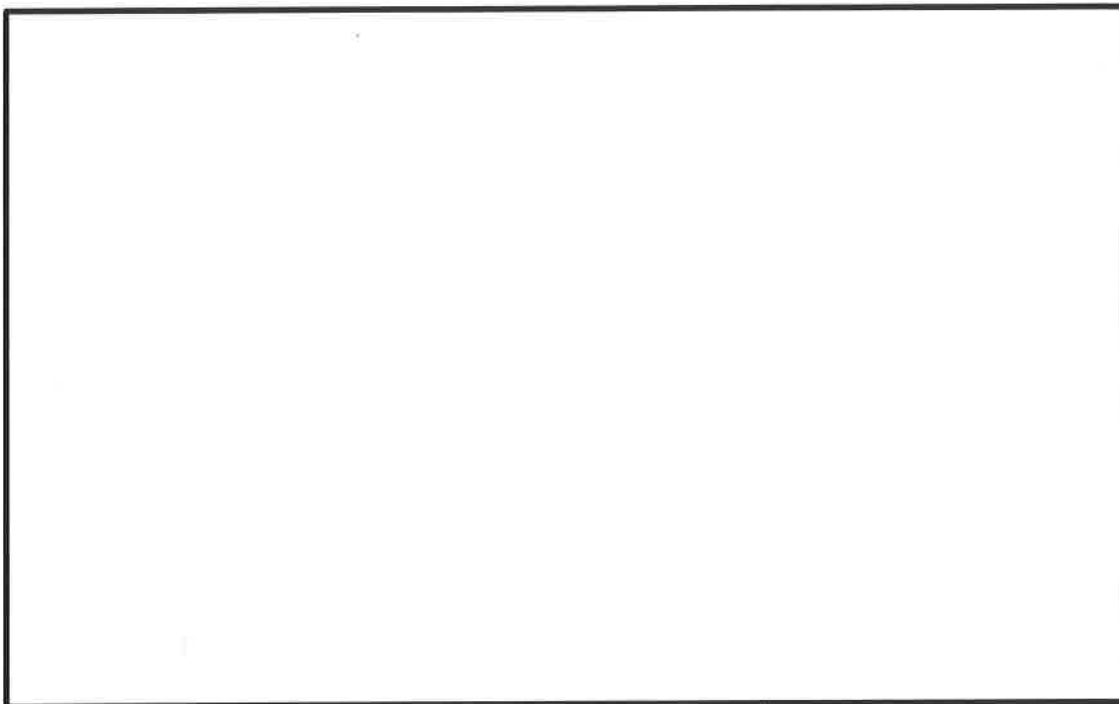
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Trip Report – Rwanda, Madagascar, Togo,  
Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali

Page 5

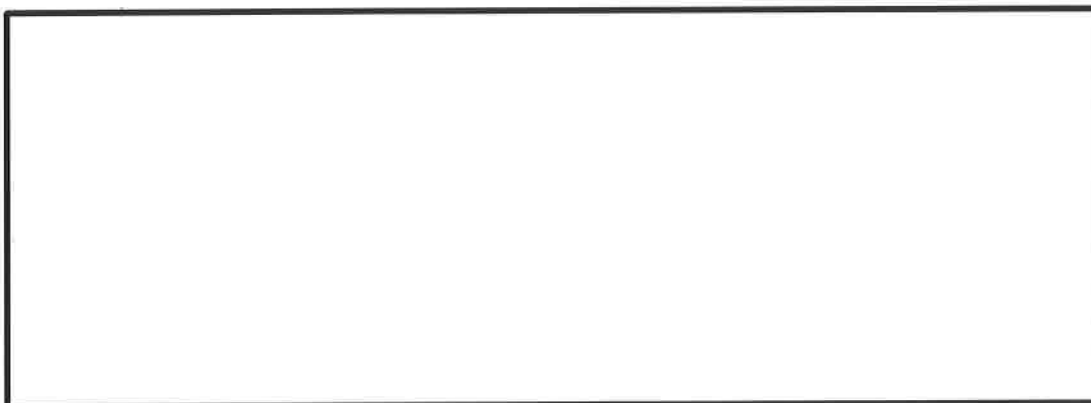
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**Other Comments:** At the request of the Acting Consul and visiting Regional Consul [redacted] from Abidjan), IO provided an extensive overview of the USRP to the entire Consular Section at Dakar, Senegal (including LESs). Visas 92 and 93 procedures featured prominently, of course, in the stimulating Q&A that followed, and there was also great interest in INS refugee interviewing techniques and the criteria and thresholds INS employs in making credibility determinations and adjudicating claims, especially imputed claims.

In Mali, IO was invited by the head of the UNHCR office, [redacted] a Malian, to visit a UNHCR-supported refugee transit center at Faranguara, near Bougouni, about 400km south of the capital, Bamako. The center occupies about four acres of land 30km from the Guinean border and 40km from the Ivory Coast border. The center property is also adjacent to a Bambara village and two “evil forests” the Malian villagers consider sacred....





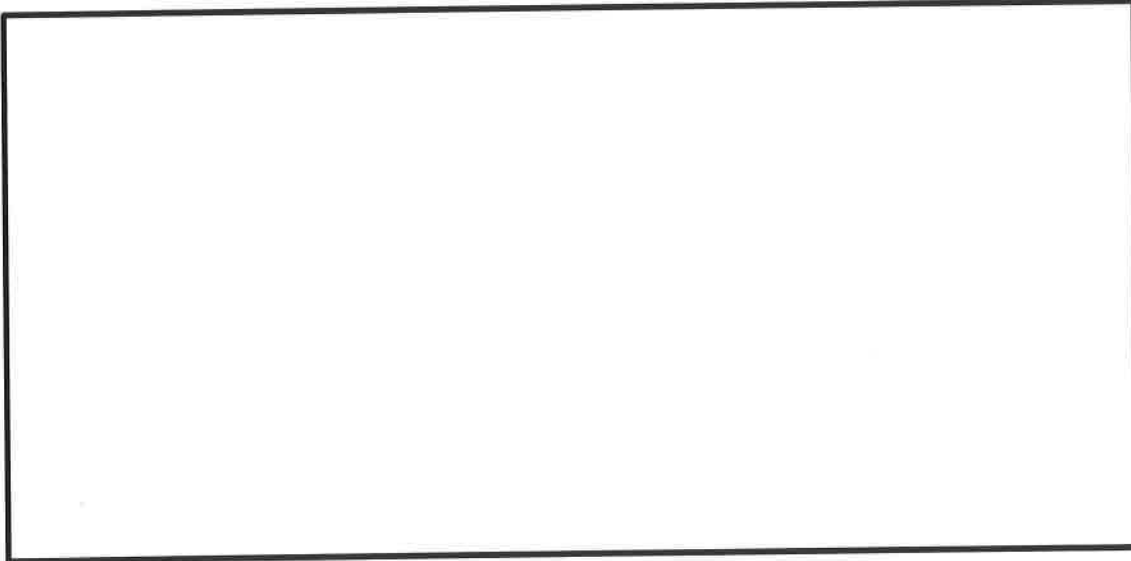
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Page 6

(b)(6) Trip Report – Rwanda, Madagascar, Togo,  
Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mali

Inside their sleeping quarters, a large open-bay barracks arrangement with mosquito-covered foam mattresses lined up on the cement floor along a center aisle, the young refugees became quite amused and accusatory when I asked them who snored the loudest at night!

My extended discussions with the center residents also provided greater insight into their camp-influenced world view as refugees, and details about the problems and anxieties they experience on a daily basis. Interspersed among the general discussion of neutral topics, the refugees tried more than once to get me to intervene on their behalf with the UNHCR for better food, water, health care, education, income generating activities, etc., and of course, a resettlement referral. I politely refused and explained that I could not advocate for them individually but would pass their general concerns on to the UNHCR representative under whose care they were and who has ultimately responsible for their protection and well-being. This I later did. They understood and accepted that I could not tell UNHCR how to do its job or do special favors for them as individuals; and were ultimately, they explained, happy just to have someone else to whom they could express their frustrations and hope for a better life.



(signed)

  
Refugee Officer

Copies to: INS Rome  
HQIAO/REF  
INS Accra  
INS Johannesburg

## Trip Report Ghana April 22-26, 2002

[REDACTED]  
Refugee Program Officer for Africa & FSU  
HQIAO Refugee Branch

April 29, 2002

**Purpose of Visit.** To conduct a quality assurance review of refugee case files completed by the February-March, 2002 circuit ride team in Ghana. To evaluate the quality of the interviews and adjudications in general as reflected in the case files; and determine, specifically, if IO interview and adjudications techniques, as reflected in selected case file documents, are related in any way to this caseload's unusually high approval rate. To conduct informal quality assurance observations of refugee interview and adjudications techniques being used by the April-May circuit ride team currently in Accra.

### February-March Accra Circuit Ride Case File Review

**The Sample.** Based on OPE Accra refugee record keeping, this circuit ride processed a total of 343/1459 Liberian Priority 3 (P3) cases/individuals. There were 264/1118 approvals, 69/313 denials and 10/28 deferrals. A comparison of case approvals to case denials reveals an approval rate of 79% for the total case load. Historically, approval rates for African P3 cases are from 60 – 70%.

A statistically random sample of 71/280 cases/individuals was taken from the total number of cases using a random table of numbers applied to case number final digits. The resulting sample, representing 21% of the entire caseload, was comprised of 59/240 approvals, 10/33 denials and 2/7 deferrals. A comparison of case approvals to case denials reveals an approval rate of 86% for this sample. This sample, though skewed in favor of approvals, was nevertheless regarded to be acceptable because it contained a higher than statistically expected number of approvals. The more approvals reviewed, the better.

**Methodology.** The quality assurance instrument used was a 19-item Refugee Adjudication Quality Assurance Worksheet recently developed by [REDACTED] HQIAO's Training and Quality Assurance Program Officer, and Rome District ADDE June Tancredi for use within the Rome District. I adopted this instrument for use because it focuses on the refugee adjudication. I added 11 items to capture information on other aspects of INS processing as follows:

1. **Access Verification** – Identity, relationship verification.
2. **Credibility Criteria** – In partial credibility cases, what criteria did the IO use in determining the overall credibility of the applicant's material testimony? What criteria and/or thresholds did the IO employ in finding testimony elements credible or not credible?

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(b)(5)

Trip Report – Ghana April 2002

Page 2 of 6

3. **Reasonable Opportunity** – Did the IO's notes reflect that the applicant was given a reasonable and full opportunity to establish a refugee claim?
4. **Fraud** – When fraud was suspected in terms of the applicant's identity, relationships or the refugee claim, did the IO fully document his/her findings and take appropriate action(s)?
5. **Payment for Access** – Did the IO's note reflect that he/she explored whether the applicant paid for access to the interview or received money for someone on his/her case to be on the case?
6. **AOR Verification Form** – Did the IO administer the AOR "come clean" form?
7. **JVA Case History** - Were there indications (annotation, underlining, highlighting and/or IO's initials and date) that the IO had reviewed the JVA Case History form?
8. **AOR Reviewed** – Were there indications (annotation, underlining, highlighting and/or IO's initials and date) that the IO reviewed and explored information contained on the AOR with the applicant(s)?
9. **Add-Ons** – Did the notes reveal that the IO made sure that Add-Ons on the case complied with case composition guidelines and that Add-On applicants established their claim to refugee status in their own right, including a credibility determination, legal analysis and exploration of bars and inadmissibilities?
10. **Signatures** – Did the IO sign all forms, as appropriate?
11. **Detailed Notes** - Were the IO's notes sufficiently detailed regarding material facts to justify his/her decision?

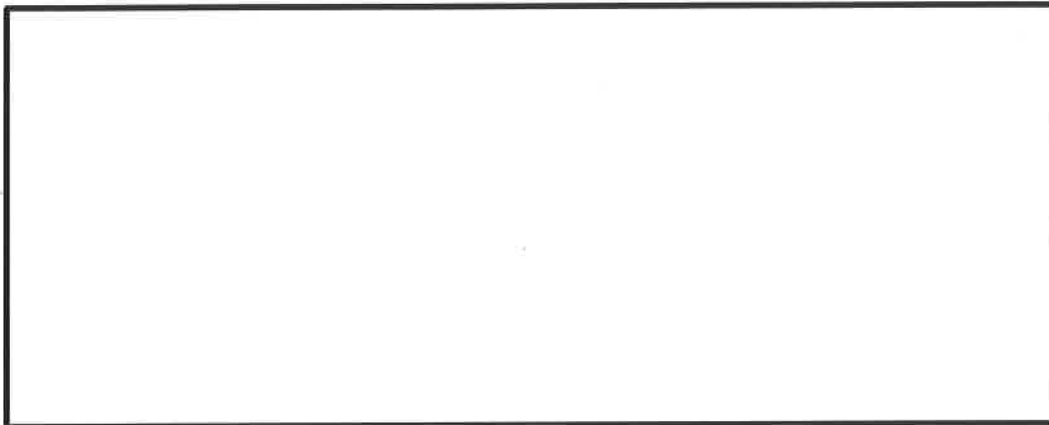
Primary Findings.

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**Trip Report – Ghana April 2002**

**Page 3 of 6**



**Secondary Findings.** Using the 11 additional QA survey items given above, the following general findings and recommendations are noted:

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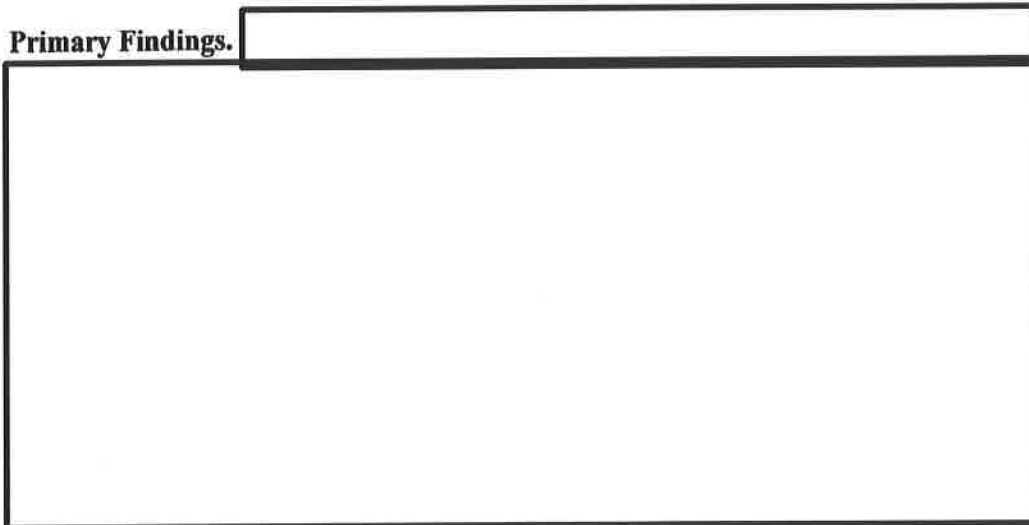
Trip Report – Ghana April 2002

Page 4 of 6

**Observations of Refugee Interviews**

**Sample and Methodology.** Despite time limitations, the QAR was able to observe one entire interview of three Officers and portions of the interviews of the 4 other Officers. QAR focused on general interview techniques and adjudications practices in the following areas:

1. Pre-Interview Review of Case File Contents
2. Introduction and Explanation of Interview and Adjudications Process
3. The Oath and Telling the Truth
4. Access Verification – Identity and Relationships
5. Signatures and Fingerprints
6. Testimony and Note-Taking
7. Analysis of the Claim
8. Credibility Determination
9. Bars and Inadmissibilities
10. Decision Making and Documentation
11. Signatures and Interview Log
12. Closure of Interview and Return of Case File to OPE

**Primary Findings.**

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**Trip Report – Ghana April 2002**

**Page 5 of 6**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Using the above categories of observation, the QAR found the following:

[REDACTED]

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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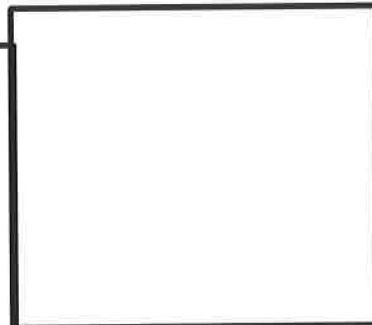
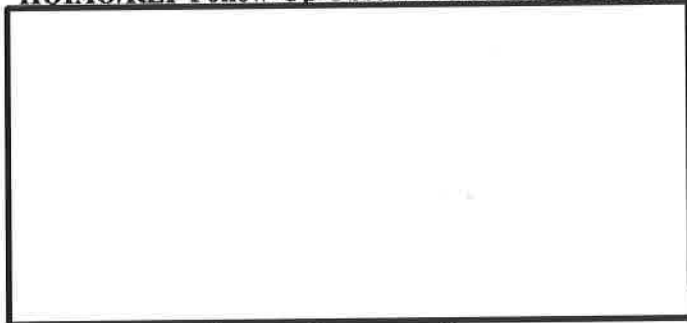
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**Trip Report – Ghana April 2002**

**Page 6 of 6**



**HOIAO/REF Follow-Up Observations and Feedback.**



End of report.

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DHS Trip Report  
Nairobi Sub-Office  
U.S. Refugee Program

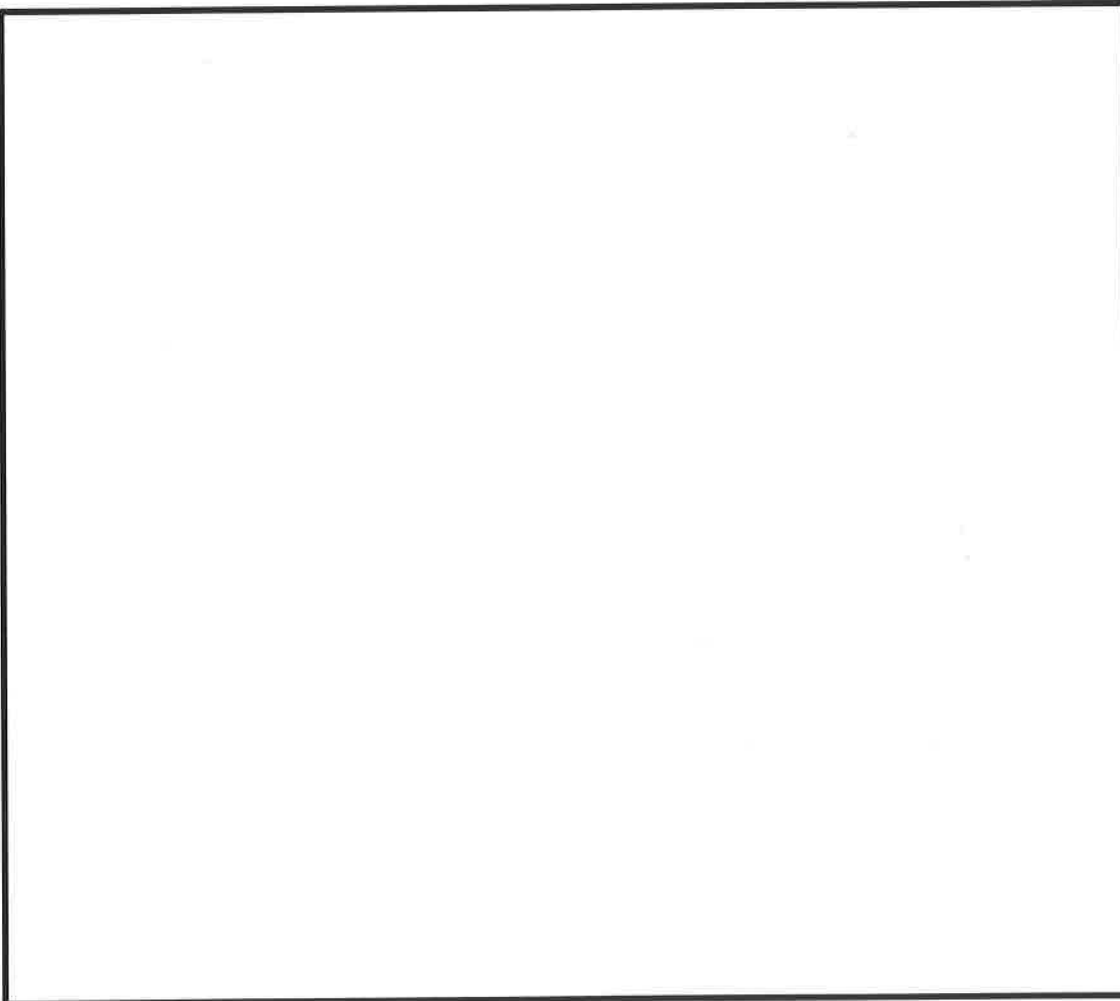
**Location of Trip:** Kakuma Refugee Kamp, Kenya

**DHS Officers:**

**Dates of Trip:** November 10-21, 2003

**Purpose of Trip:** Refugee Interviews

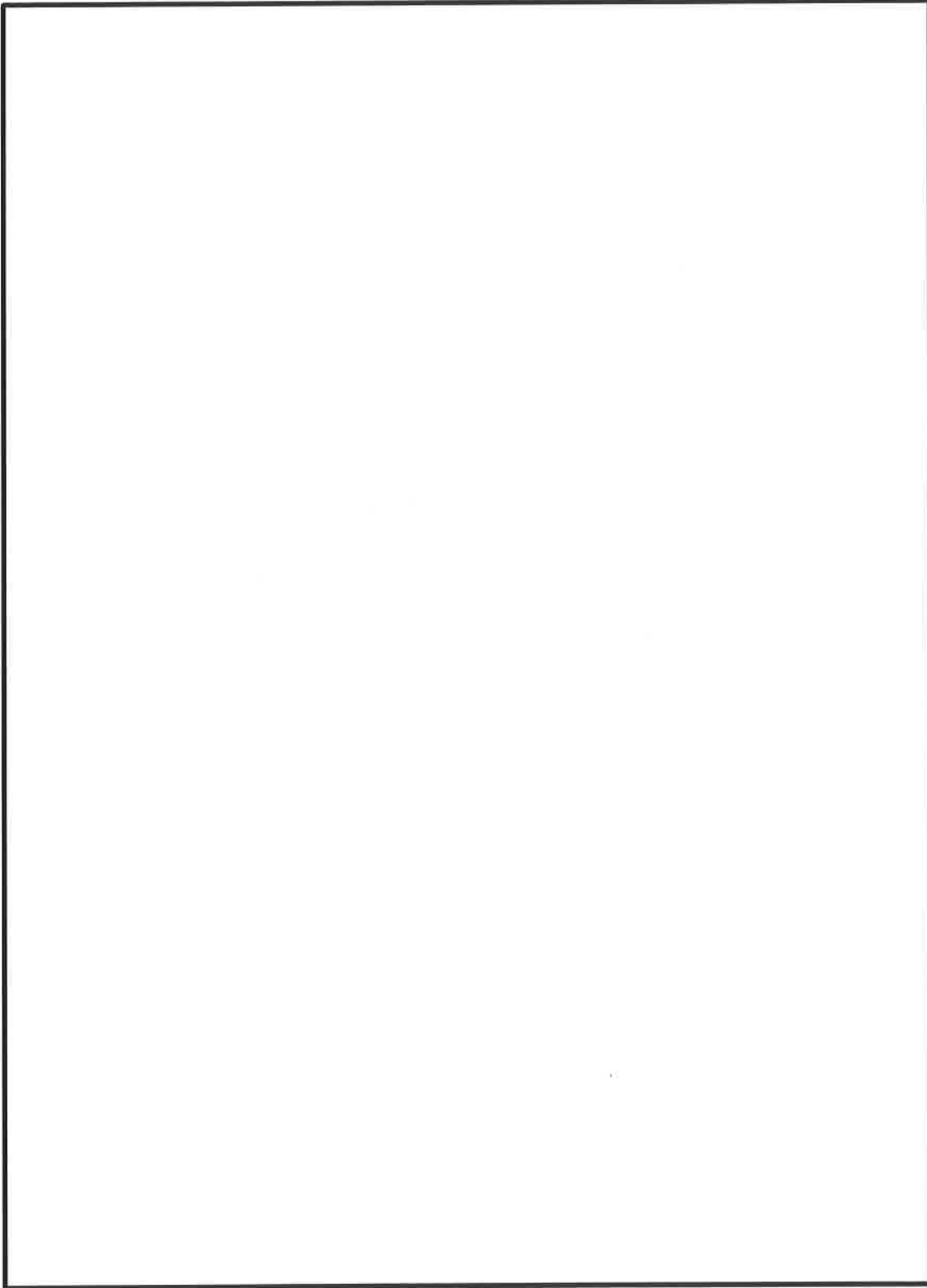
**General Physical Description of Worksite(s):** Kakuma Refugee Camp is located in northwest Kenya, approximately 70 miles from the Sudanese border. Located in the Great Rift Valley, the camp is home to roughly 100,000 refugees, primarily from Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. The local Kenyan tribesmen, who live and work about the camp, are known as the Turkana. The climate of the camp is very warm with daily temperatures reaching and exceeding 40 degrees Celsius. The area receives very little rain, and blinding dust storms occur almost daily.





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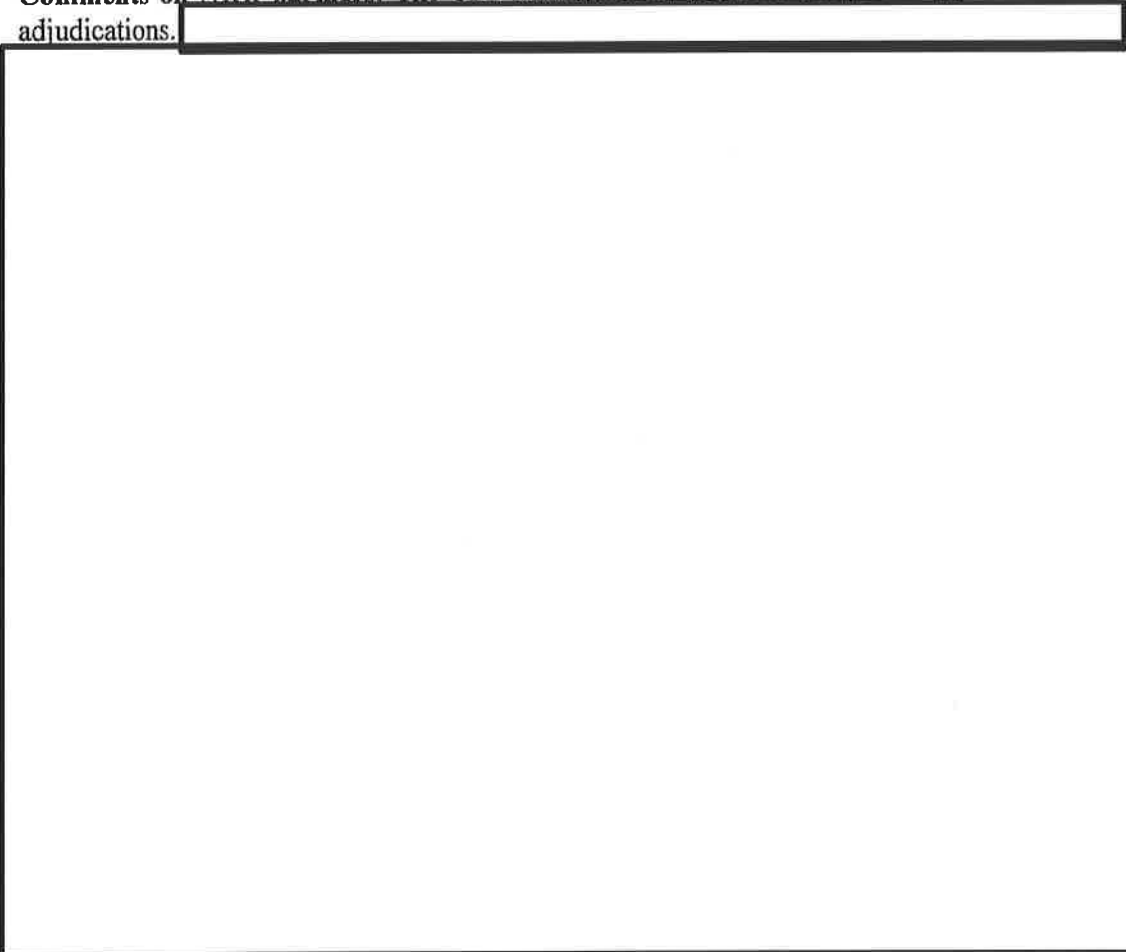


**Caseload Information:** The caseload consisted of 333 Somali Bantu P-2 cases, with one Sudanese P-3 case on November 18. The team approved (or *conditionally* approved pending

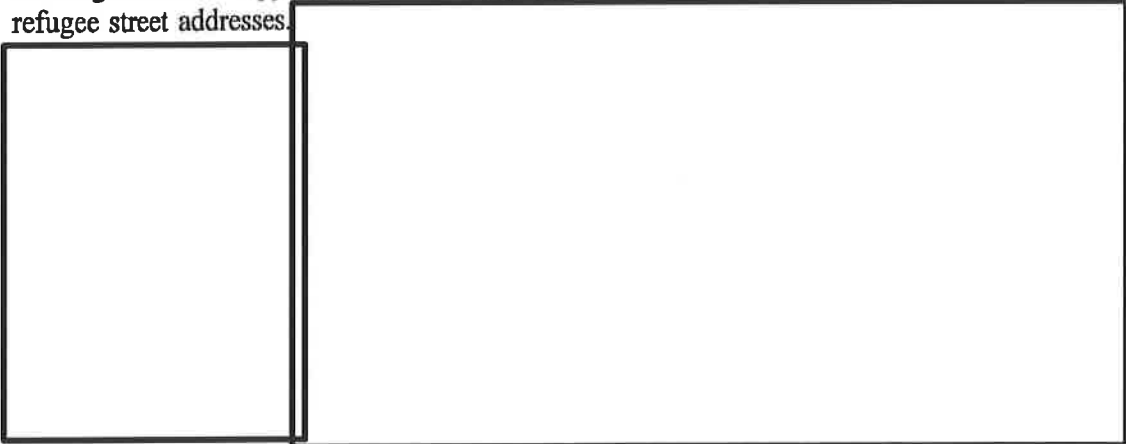
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security checks) 273 of the cases interviewed, and the average case size was approximately 5 applicants per case.

**Comments on NGO partners:** The OPE team generally provided adequate support for DHS' adjudications.



The UNHCR staff on site was generally helpful. On several occasions, applicants needed to be called back to the interview site for additional casework, and UNHCR was very proficient at locating individual applicants in this large camp without the benefit of telephones or fixed refugee street addresses.



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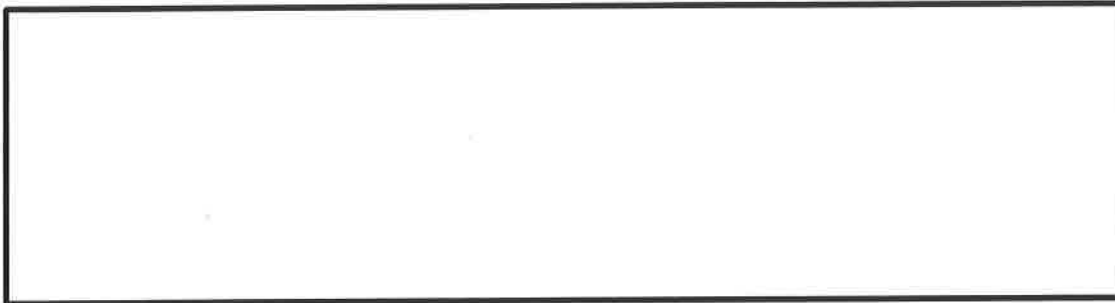
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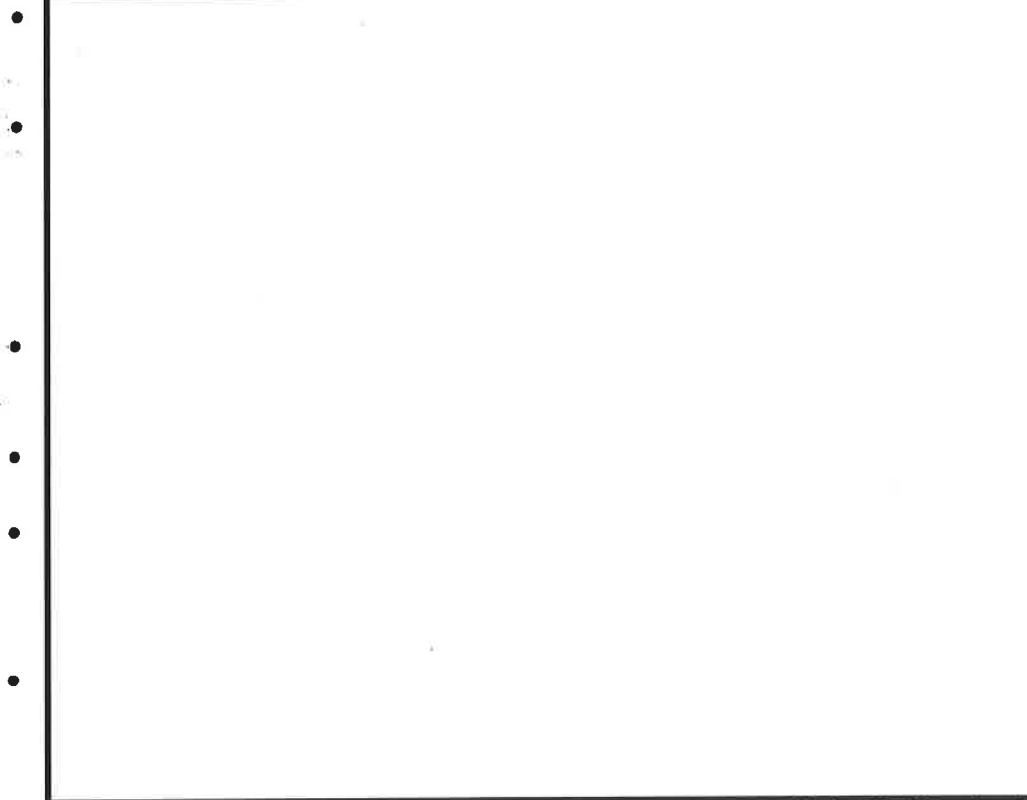
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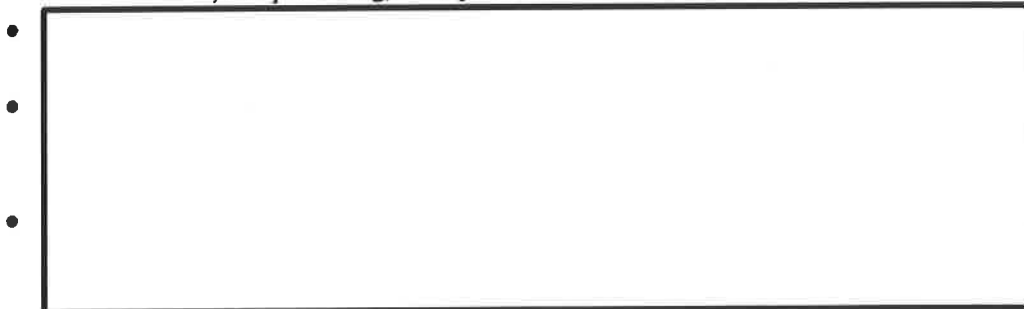
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**Lessons Learned/Comments:** In the aftermath of this challenging and successful stay in Kakuma, a number of suggestions can be offered. These suggestions cover nearly all aspects of the team's stay in Kakuma, and vary in feasibility and exigency. The most important and feasible suggestions have been listed first:



- Prospective DHS officers should be informed of the very high likelihood of encountering poisonous wildlife, and the local medical facilities should be equipped with snakebite, scorpion-sting, and spider-bite treatment.



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- DHS teams should be provided with documentation specifying the nature of their housing accommodations and pecuniary obligations in Kakuma.



Submitted By:

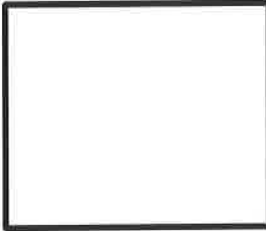
Date: November 30, 2003

# TRIP REPORT

## WEST AFRICA CIRCUIT RIDE

April 29 – June 30, 2004

### TEAM



HQ (Team Leader)

ZSF

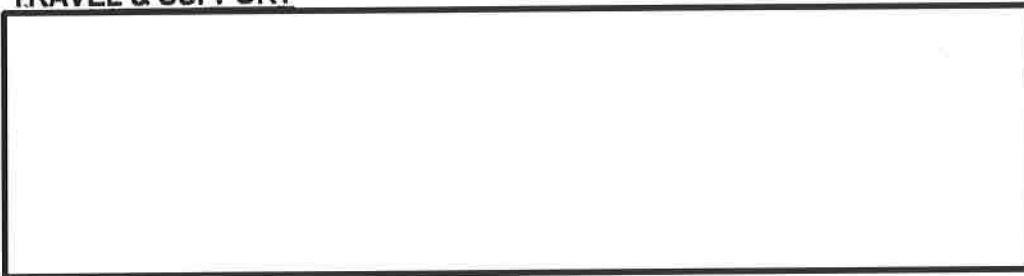
ZLA

ZLA

ZMI

ZNY

### TRAVEL & SUPPORT



Team received excellent support from Embassy staff throughout their stay in Guinea. [REDACTED] The OPE team was excellent. Team had no problems working with the OPE staff. Team leader enquired about the late start (sometimes as late as 10.00 a.m.) on presenting case files in the mornings. There were only three individuals sent on the DHS circuit ride. An additional OPE employee was later sent from Accra to remedy the situation.

### ADJUDICATIONS

#### **Conakry, Guinea**

Team interviewed both P1 and P3 cases. The P1 cases from UNHCR from Laine Camp were strong and were all approved except one. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The P3 cases were mostly re-interviews of parts of RAVU rejected cases. Some cases were old Ivory Coast (Danane) cases transferred to Conakry because applicants had fled to this area due to unrest in the Ivory Coast. While approval rate for P1 caseload was high, only 25% of individuals on P3 cases



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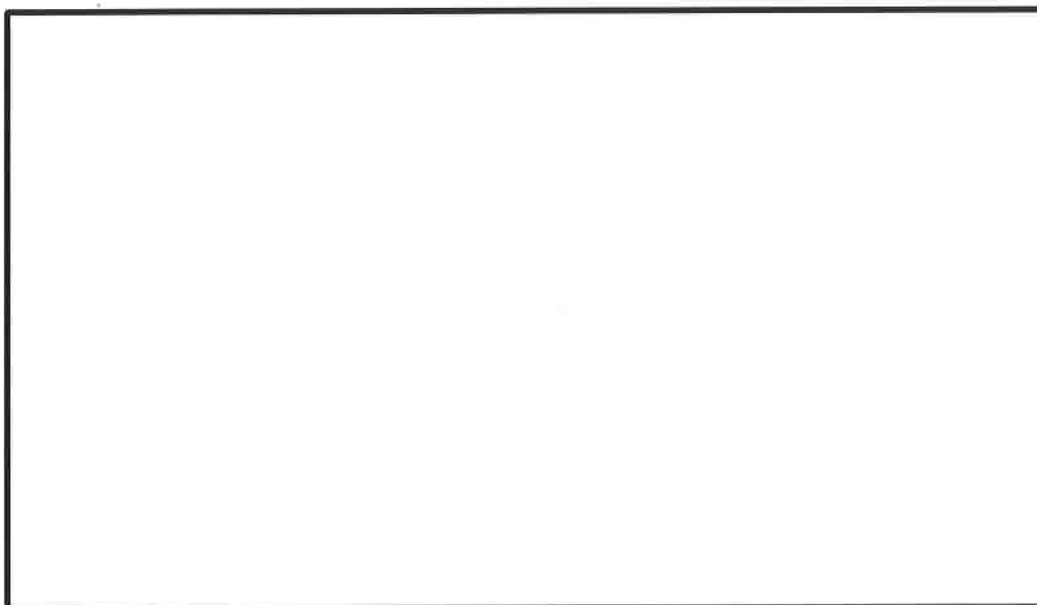
were approved even with generous adjudications. There was rampant fraud in these cases, especially the Danane transfers. There were no incidents at the interview site.

**Accra, Ghana**



In terms of the presentation in Accra, the cases were similar, and the P1/P3 presentation was the same as it was in Conakry. The P1 cases, mostly (Sierra Leoneans) from the UNHCR camp in Takoradi were solid and all were approved. According to OPE, the USRP did not get the numbers expected (one third of the cases available was presented) because UNHCR had given the rest to Australia and the U.K. The problems we encountered with the P3 cases in Conakry, were also present in the P3 presentations in Accra.

**Interpreters**

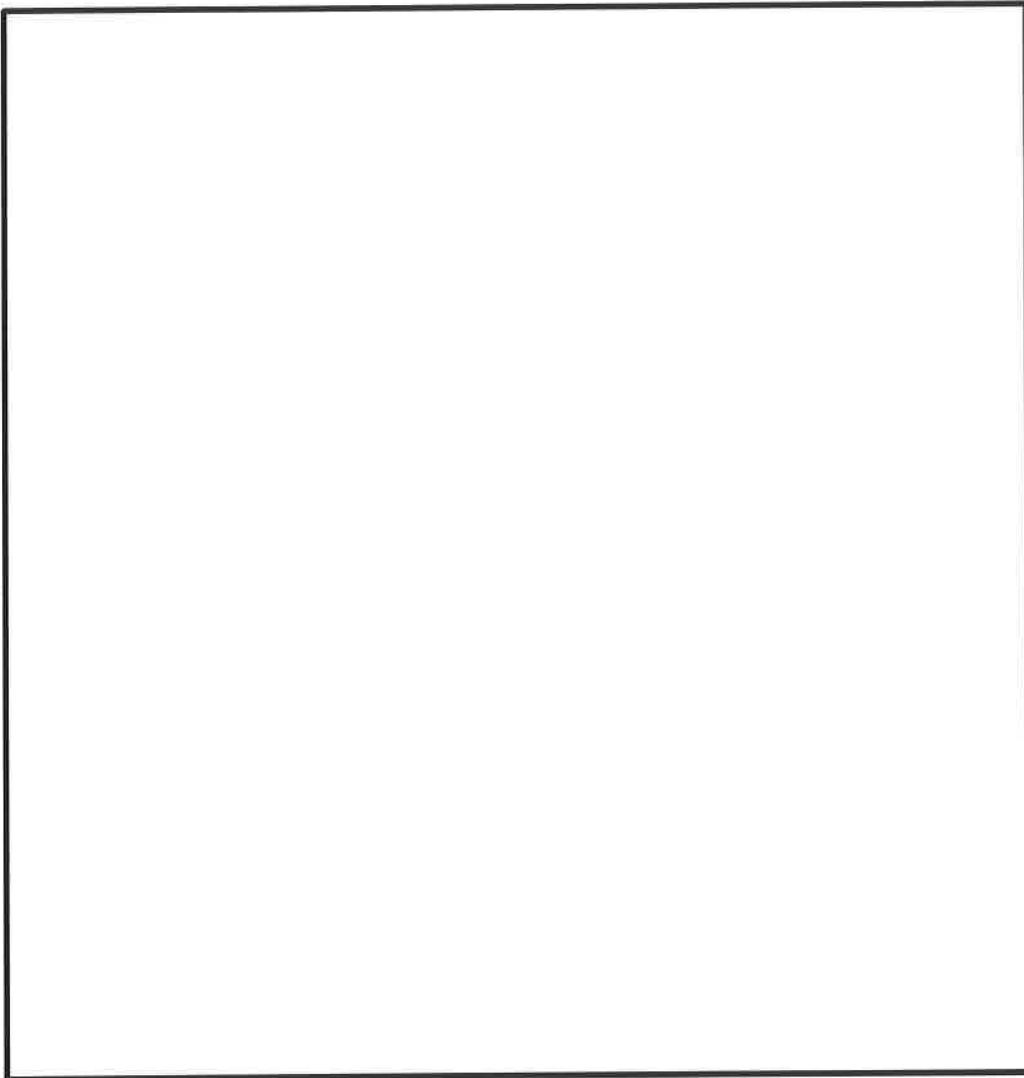


**FRAUD TRENDS IN P3**

The usual fraud trends were observed.



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#### **VISA 92/93 Fraud**

Team adjudicated a number of Visa 92/93 cases in Ghana and some were denied based on fraud documents. Many were for applicants who married post-adjudication/pre-departure and could not prove a valid marriage. Others were of children who presented fake school and medical documents and in some case, were not the applicants being filed for. Team established that anchors in the U.S were presenting fraudulent documents to the Service Center when proof of relationship was demanded.

#### **RAVU**

As has been noted by other team leaders, RAVU has had a significant impact on P3 circuit rides especially in West Africa. The information provided was a very

useful tool by which officers were able to adjudicate their caseload in more accurately and in good time. While this is helpful, many officers who end up on the circuit rides are not familiar with RAVU. Even the officers who have adjudicated with RAVU results in the past cannot resolve complex RAVU decisions and everyone has to rely on the Team Leader, which takes time away from reviews and other duties.

Although RAVU is very helpful for now, indications are that those who wish to continue participating in fraud are getting ahead. In many cases, officers had to spend time removing names of individuals on I-590s that are clearly not related to the applicant. In many cases, the applicant admits that those that he/she named as "children" or "step-children" etc. are actually not related to the applicant in any way.

#### **OFFICER PERFORMANCE**

Most officers performed their duties satisfactorily. (See individual Officer Feedback Reports).

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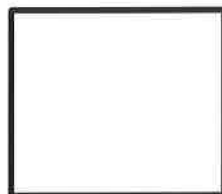
TRIP REPORT  
NAIROBI REFUGEE TEAM #2  
JANUARY 14 – MARCH 11, 2005

**Purpose of the Detail:**

To interview applicants for refugee status located in Nairobi, Kenya; Dadaab Refugee Camp, Kenya; Johannesburg, South Africa; Maputo, Mozambique; and Lusaka, Zambia. Over the course of the entire detail, 541 scheduled cases were interviewed. Of these 541 cases, 372 (or 68.7%) were approved, 162 were denied, and 7 were administratively closed.

**Composition of Team:**

Team Leader and  
Nomad Officer:



(Headquarters)

Interviewing Officers:

(Arlington Asylum Office)  
(Newark Asylum Office)  
(Miami Asylum Office)

Support Personnel: Joint Voluntary Agency (JVA), Nairobi

**Pre-Departure Preparation and Training:**

The Headquarters staff responsible for organizing the detail [redacted] and [redacted] did their usual excellent job of ensuring that qualified officers were selected for the detail and that all detailees were able to obtain all necessary travel documents, immunizations, visas, travel advances and airline tickets. Kudos to Mr. [redacted] for doing so despite the fact that this was all accomplished over the Christmas/New Year's holiday period and despite complications caused by:

- (1) Protracted negotiations between the Rome District / Nairobi Suboffice and the Overseas Processing Entities regarding the locations to be visited and casework to be adjudicated during the "nomad" portion of the detail, and
- (2) The need to find a replacement for one of the interviewing officers who had to back out of the detail less than 48 hours before orientation was to begin.

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All team members took part in a two-day orientation and training program in Washington, DC on January 6 and 7, 2005. [REDACTED] conducted the training with assistance from Mr. [REDACTED]. The information provided was very helpful in preparing the team members for their journey (especially those team members who had not previously been on an African refugee detail).

In addition, all team members participated in security training conducted in Winchester, VA, from January 9-14, 2005. (Effective January 2005, all CIS personnel going overseas for periods of 30 days or longer are required to complete this security training course. [REDACTED])

[REDACTED] The course was both interesting and informative. Because this was the first time the course has been offered, the course organizers and instructors have requested that upon completion of their details course attendees make recommendations on changes and improvements in the structure and content of the course. Some suggestions are provided below under "Areas of Concern and Recommendations."

#### Travel to and Arrival in Africa:

Upon completion of the security training, all team members departed from Dulles Airport on either January 14 or 15, 2005, and arrived in Africa by January 16, 2005. With the exception of the team leader (who traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa), all team members flew to Nairobi, Kenya where they were met by the Acting CIS Officer-in-Charge. All travel was conducted without incident.

#### Nomad Portion of the Detail:

- Travel to Johannesburg, South Africa – The team leader / nomad officer traveled to Johannesburg and arrived without incident.
- Facilities and Support in Johannesburg – The interviews were all conducted at the U.S. consulate where the USRP officer was provided with good facilities and received excellent support from the local staff. Furthermore, the officer would like to especially commend the JVA official, [REDACTED] who provided outstanding administrative support.
- Casework in Johannesburg – During the Johannesburg portion of the Nairobi circuit ride, the nomad officer interviewed 15 scheduled cases involving 20 individuals. Of the 15 cases, 11 (or 73.3%) were approved

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(including those tentatively approved and on hold pending CLASS and/or SAO checks), 4 were denied and none were administratively closed.

- Travel to Maputo, Mozambique – Travel from Johannesburg to Maputo occurred without incident.
- Facilities and Support in Maputo – The interviews were all conducted at the U.S. consulate where the USRP officer was provided with good facilities and received excellent support from the local staff. Of particular note is the assistance provided by consular section employee [redacted] who served as excellent interpreters in addition to providing other support for the USRP officer. As in Johannesburg, JVA official [redacted] provided outstanding administrative support.
- Casework in Maputo – During the Maputo portion of the Nairobi circuit ride, the team interviewed 13 scheduled cases involving 22 individuals. Of the 13 cases, 9 (or 69.2%) were approved (including those tentatively approved and on hold pending CLASS and/or SAO checks), 4 were denied and none were administratively closed.
- Travel to Lusaka, Zambia – Travel from Maputo to Lusaka occurred without incident.
- Facilities and Support in Lusaka – The interviews were all conducted at the [redacted] where the USRP officer was provided with good facilities and received excellent support from the local staff. JVA official [redacted] provided outstanding administrative support.
- Casework in Lusaka – During the Lusaka portion of the Nairobi circuit ride, the team interviewed 13 scheduled cases involving 65 individuals. Of the 13 cases, 11 (or 84.6%) were approved (including those tentatively approved and on hold pending CLASS and/or SAO checks), 2 were denied and none were administratively closed.
- Travel to Nairobi, Kenya – Travel from Lusaka to Nairobi occurred without incident.

#### Kenya Portion of the Detail:

- Nairobi
  - Training in Nairobi – The team members reported that the OIC did a great job of conducting training in all matters to be covered during the detail, condensing his normal 3-day course into 2 days. But